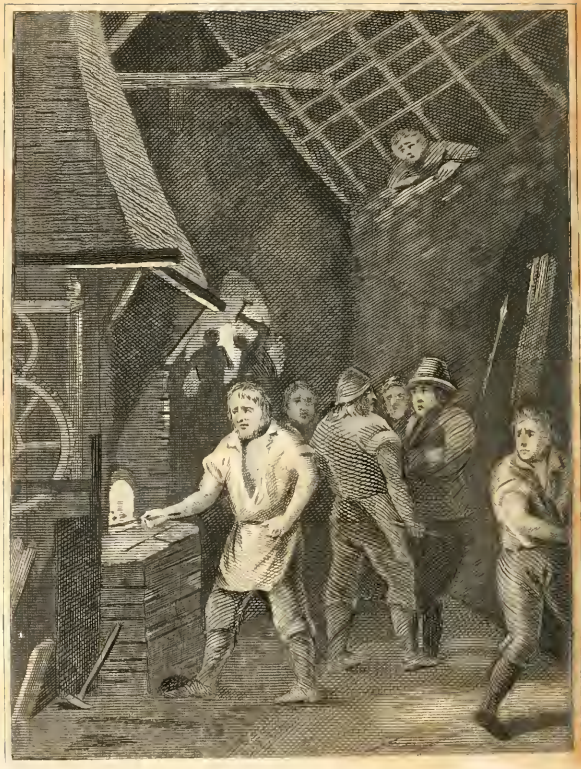
AUG 3 1894

J.108

QL 430.2



Tales of the Munster Festivals.

THE CARD-DRAWER,

THE HALF-SIR,

SUIL DHUV, THE COINER.

BY

GERALD GRIFFIN,

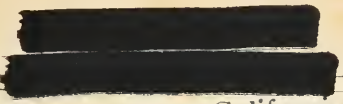
AUTHOR OF "THE COLLEGIANS," ETC.

823.79
G852
V2

NEW YORK:
D. & J. SADLIER & CO., 164 WILLIAM STREET.

5-5-52

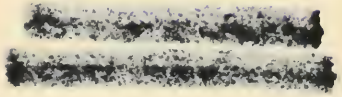
MONTREAL: CO... OF NOTRE DAME & ... FRANCIS XAVIER STS.



Santa Barbara, California

MR

5552



INTRODUCTION

TO THE SECOND SERIES.

The tide was almost out when I arrived, in the summer which has just gone by, on the eastern shore of the bay of Bealcraigh or Scagh, which runs into the wildest portion of the county of Clare, within several miles of the mouth of the Shannon. I had proposed taking in my route up the river the celebrated isle of Scattery, which now looked dim and distant with its round tower and ruined churches, near the mouth of the bay. It was with no little chagrin, therefore, I discovered that not a single boat on the shore would float for several hours, after the lapse of which, as I was informed by a smart little child, with her gown turned up in a womanly fashion over her head—"the boatman would lay me any where down the river I'd like, an' welcome, without a hai'p'ny expense;" but it would be too late to stop at St. Sinon's isle.

There was little, moreover, in the scenery which immediately surrounded me that could furnish sufficient employment to keep off the demon of *ennui*, during the slow and creeping progress of the glassy tide. A black-looking country, covered as far as my eye could reach, all round the spacious bay, with numerous turf-yards and farm-houses of the humbiest description, possessing wildness without grandeur, and tameness without beauty—destitute even of the least particles of foliage—however amusing it might appear to the traveller from its novelty, would afford a poor subject for the pencil of the draughtsman; and, modestly call-

ing to mind how very indifferently landscapes of real beauty had fared under my pencil, I prudently calculated that the result of a similar operation in the present instance could not be very interesting.

While I loitered, therefore, along the shore, crushing the cast crab-shells and withered sea-weed under my feet, watching a group of country people and turf boatmen who were loading one of their heavy open craft (which lay at some distance bedded on her side in the slob), with potatoes for some inland market, and turning an impatient glance on the silent water, as it stole by half inches over the dun and weary extent of level mud that spread between the strand and channel, and gradually began to fill the ruts and foot-prints about the vessel's keel, my attention was arrested by the sound of a female voice at a few paces behind.

I turned round, and was presently accosted by a modest-looking woman, neatly dressed in the scarlet fur-trimmed cloak, clean white cap and ribbon, which are popular among the cottage fashionables. Her business was to inform me, that her husband, Patey Magrath (the word was spoken with a slight confusion and downcast timidity of manner, which intimated that he had not long enjoyed that blissful title,) the owner of the boat, and of a neat cottage which lay *convenient*, seeing a strange gentleman walking on the strand, had bid her say, that he'd take it as a favour, if I'd just step in and take a chair, until the boat would be afloat, when the boy would be sure to let me know.

I accepted the invitation, with suitable acknowledgments, and, following my tidy conductress, was presently shown into a neat, boarded room, furnished with a few wooden chairs, an old Gothic-panelled press, a few highly-coloured religious prints, and a plain oak table, near which was seated a personage of so singular an appearance, that I shall venture to describe him at full length.

He was an old man—unfortunately, a sour old man—lean and long-limbed, and affecting, as much as he possibly

might, without rendering himself absolutely ridiculous, a costume which appeared to me to bear a close resemblance to some of the most antique of our national habiliments. His pantaloons, which in younger days might have fitted tight on the limbs over which they now lay lapped in many an ungainly fold, might have passed, but for its singleness of hue, for an ancient truis—his hat, which now lay on the table, broad brimmed and conical in the crown, seemed but another fashion of the birrede of the Ollamh—his hair was thrown back on all sides from his brow and face, so as to f ll in the form of a glib on the neck behind—and his cloak (rather perhaps from his manner of wearing it than from its actual form) might not inaptly be compared to the Milesian fillead.

Near the window, which looked on the bay, sat a respectable looking, middle-aged woman, of a gentle, pleasing countenance, which still retained all the elements of beauty, although the weeds of widowhood, which the possessor wore, and the pale cheek and sobered glance which harmonized with them so sweetly, yet so mournfully, showed that the days had gone by when she valued the endowment. She rose from her seat as I entered, and received me with a low courtesy and smile of welcome, after which she resumed her place and her knitting in silence. The strange gentleman merely measured my person with a sullen and supercilious eye, and continued to pore over a tattered volume which lay before him.

The ungracious tone in which he replied to an apology made him by my conductress, for the delay to which he was unavoidably subjected, deterred me from attempting to draw him into any conversation, and wishing to detain the young woman, who appeared to be the only social individual of the three, I said, looking at a medal which was suspended by a blue ribbon over the wooden chimney-piece, and on which I could discern the word "Trafalgar," with the date of poor Nelson's victory :—

"Your husband has served, I perceive?" And I pointed with my finger to the medal.

"Oh, no, Sir," she replied, laughing; "passen what ser vice he seen aboord the turf-boat up and down from Limerick, I believe he hasn't a hai'porth to tell more than meself."

"Why do you laugh?"

"Because, Sir," replied the elder matron, who sat near the window, "she thought what an old husband she'd have in Patey, if he had served in that battle."

"It is true," said I, a little confused, "and I ought to have recollected it—and I should be very sorry to see so pretty a girl matched with an old man—" (here the gentleman at the table looked at me askance, inside his spectacles)—"even though he *had* fought by the side of our great hero."

This speech restored me to favour, and in a little time the younger woman informed me in an under tone, that the medal belonged to her aunt Dorgan's husband, who had died about a year before, and whose widow (the very person who had just divined the cause of her merriment) had resided with her husband and herself since their marriage—an event which, she intimated with a becoming blush and stammer, had taken place about three months since.

"That medal, I dare say," said I, "was an honour of which he was very proud."

"It was an honour, Sir, that nearly cost him dear enough, at one time," replied my informant.

"How was that?"

"I will tell you that, Sir," she said, in a half whisper, "when my aunt, poor woman, laves the room, as she's goen at this minute, and she mightn't like to be reminded of it, poor creature."

I congratulated myself that I had not blundered upon these awkward reminiscences in society where fashion and education have unhappily fostered a morbid refinement of feeling, and where, in all probability, a more distant allusion

than I had here made would have left me to answer for a hysterical passion or a fainting fit. When the handsome widow, in a little time after, had dropped her quiet courtesy, and left the room, I reminded her young niece of the promise I had received. She gave me, in as few words as possible, the incidents of the Irish seaman's adventure—which were affecting in themselves, and rendered doubly so by the natural and feeling manner in which she delivered them.

"It would make an interesting tale," said I, when she had concluded.

The elderly gentleman here again raised his head, and peering on me through his half-closed eye-lashes, with a sneering smile, as if he would say, "you know a great deal about the matter, I dare swear"— he once more resumed his studies.

"Talking of tales," I continued, wishing to analyse the old gentleman, as soon as we were left alone together, which happened shortly after—"it is surprising that while so many able pens are employed in delineating the manners and scenery of all other parts of Ireland—this unique and interesting people, and the magnificent wonders of their coast should have altogether escaped attention."

This I said with a certain tone of authority and loudness, as if to compel a degree of deference from my morose companion. He replied, however, in a gruff tone, and without raising his eyes from the book—"I'm very glad they have, I'm sure—I'd be very sorry it was otherwise."

"I believe you are rather singular in that opinion," said I, "and it is fortunate for our novelists that you are so. Tales of this nature are, I believe, very popular at present."

"I have something else to do besides reading them," he replied.

"You are a fortunate man," said I, "if you can employ *all* your time more profitably and agreeably. For my part, I am of opinion that they might be made the vehicle of not only very agreeable, but very useful information. Besides,

they throw a train of pleasing associations around the people whose manners they describe, which never fades nor is forgotten, and which is found to serve them among their neighbour nations in a hundred ways. For instance, if a Venetian, or a Mid-Lothianite, and a Munsterman were asking an alms, and I (a citizen of the world, having no country claims with any of the three), had but a penny to give in charity, I should at once bestow it upon the Venetian or the Scot, while the poor Munsterman might go empty-handed, because his birth-place had not at once brought to my recollection the delightful illusions of an Otway or a Jedediah Cleishbotham. I will go yet farther and say, that the conscientious novelist, supposing that he drew his portraitures scrupulously from nature, might effect a still higher purpose. He might furnish the statesman and the legislator with an index to the dispositions and habits of the people he was to govern, and who were too distant for personal inquiry or observation."

The old gentleman appeared to like my pertinacity. He wiped his spectacles, put them into their case, and closed his book while I was speaking, as if he were preparing to take my hypothesis to pieces at his leisure.

"You are like the music-master in Moliere," said he, again looking at me with his smile of contemptuous toleration, "who attributes all the wars, famines, pestilences, I believe, crimes, murders, and all other miseries and enormities by which mankind are disgraced and punished, to a want of the general diffusion of musical knowledge. You seem to have the same faith in the influence of novels that he had in that of cat-gut and rosin. You would, I suppose, have a typhus fever, or a scarcity of potatoes, remedied by a smart tale, while you would knock a general insurrection on the head with a romance in three volumes!"

"Not so fast," said I, "mine was no such Utopian fancy. I gave the class of writers in question, their moderate proportion of value—but you appear to be one of those who

must have them do all or nothing—who—to use one of our Irish proverbs—if a man were to carry you on his back from this to O'Brien's-bridge, would fling him into the stream for not carrying you over."

"I am one of those," said the old gentleman, who appeared to be best pleased with rough usage, "who think that a ruined people stand in need of a more potent restorative than an old wife's story. The author of the English Lexicon said of a conceited dramatist, who attributed something of a similar influence to one of his productions—'that those who affected to think the Church of England in danger, might affect to think that a play could save it;' and so may I now say, that those who affect to think that the condition of Ireland can ever be made prosperous, may also affect to think that such an alteration may be brought about by a novel. But if such a ridiculous idea can be seriously entertained for an instant, this, at least, is certain—We are in no wise indebted to those writers, however brilliant their acquisitions or endowments may be, who, professing to present faithful illustrations of the minds and hearts of our countrymen, greedily rake up the forgotten superstitions of our peasantry, and exhibit the result of their ungracious researches, the unhappy blemishes of our island, the weaknesses of our poor uninstructed peasantry, over which decency and good feeling would have thrown a veil, to the eyes of a world, that, unfortunately for us, is but too eager to seize every occasion for mockery and upbraiding against our forlorn and neglected country."

I heard this with a disagreeable consciousness, for which perhaps the reader may be enabled to account when he has perused the whole of these volumes. It was the first hit the old gentleman made, which told upon my conscience. I rallied speedily however. "You would have them write then," said I, "on the plan of some American novelists, who take care to construct their narrative, so as that they may be enabled to Jonathanize all the virtues, while all the

villains of the tale shall be either Indians or Englishmen For my part, I believe, and I am proud to say it, the great majority of my countrymen are far superior to that narrow-minded, national conceit which cannot relish a strong truth (even admitting it to be over-seasoned for the sake of *effect*,) and which would prefer idle flattery to instruction."

"Nay," said the old gentleman, "but deal fairly with us. Give our lights, if you will not overlook our shadows. I would ask you with Falstaff, is there no virtue extant? Look around, and say whether the darkness and guilt that forms the burthen of those fictions which you defend, does not far overbear the actual proportion in real life? Have not our bogs and mountains their scenes of quiet contented virtue—of noble suffering—of generous forgiveness—of strong, rude intellect and constant love, to match the 'black attone,' of turbulence—impatience—revenge—credulous folly, and licentious passion which you would attribute to them? Or if the idea of mirth and innocence, and milk and water be so closely associated in their eyes—let them turn to the Ireland that once *was*—and say, whether they cannot find there a theme worthy of the most splendid and varied capabilities. Are there not materials for descriptive energy in the sports of Tailton, the cosherings of the tioseach, and the concerts of the crotaries? Is there not sufficient variety of character, comic, tragic, chivalrous, and profound, from the Daltin up to the Ard righ? Can the Jerna of the Stagyrite, and Orpheus of Crotona—the Juverna of Juvenal, Pomponius Mela, and Solinus—the Iuernia of Ptolemy—the Iris of Diodorus Siculus—the Iren of the author of Gildas Badonicus—the Ierne of Claudian, of Strabo, and the Stephen of Bizance—the Ogygia of O'Flaherty and Plutarch," [not Plutarch and O'Flaherty] "the Hibernia of Cæsar, of Pliny, Tacitus and Orosius, can this ancient land afford no subject for the imagination of the writer of fiction among the sixteen nations described by Marcianus Heracleota, in his tract called Peripleus?"

"This leaves Jenkinson and the cosmogony far in the distance," said I in my own mind, surveying my companion with a certain involuntary feeling of suspicion which I have entertained towards very learned talkers ever since I read Goldsmith's tale. Before I could reply, my hostess entered to tell me, that the boat was afloat, and I saw, on looking from the window, the men tugging hard at the peak-halliard, while the loose and tarred mainsail flapped in the pleasant westerly wind that was just springing up. I left the antiquarian, for such I now conjectured him to be, at his studies, and hastened on board.

The reader will perceive that I have acted on the hints furnished by my hostess, in the first of these tales, and should they meet with the sunshine of his approbation, it may be easy to show, before long, that I have not slept on that which was thrown out by the Periwinkle of the bogs.

SONNETS.—INTRODUCTORY.

I.

Friends, far away—and late in life exiled—
Whene'er these scattered pages meet your gaze,
Think of the scenes where early fortune smiled—
The land that was your home in happier days—
The sloping lawn, to which the tired rays
Of evening stole o'er Shannon's sheeted flood—
The hills of Clare, that in its softening haze,
Locked vapour-like and dim—the lonely wood—
The cliff-bound inch—the chapel in the glen,
Where oft with bare and reverent locks we stood,
To hear th' Eternal truths—the small, dark maze
Of the wild stream that clipp'd the blossom'd plain,
And toiling through the varied solitude,
Uprais'd its hundred silver tongues and babbled praise.

II.

That home is desolate!—our quiet hearth
Is ruinous and cold—and many a sight
And many a sound are met of vulgar mirth,
Where once your gentle laughter cheered the night—
It is as with your country. The calm light
Of social peace, for her is quenched too—
Rude Discord blots her scenes of old delight,
Her gentle virtues scared away—like you.
Remember her, when in this Tale ye meet
The story of a struggling right—of ties
Fast bound, and swiftly rent—of joy—of pain—
Legends, which by the cottage-fire sound sweet—
Nor let the hand which wakes those memories
(In faint, but fond essay) be unremembered then.

CARD DRAWING

"Is this my welcome home?"—SOUTHERNE.

THOSE who are deservedly loud in their commendations of the gallantry displayed by British seamen during the last war, have generally been willing to admit that those supporters of the national flag whom Ireland sent to man our fleets, did not tread the decks like children. We shall, however, content ourselves with referring our readers who may be curious on the subject, to the chronicle of Mr. James, or any other naval Tacitus of the day, for examples of the truth of the observation, as we wish not to encumber our slender narrative with any unnecessary historical detail.

Whether Mr. James records the exploits of a certain Duke Dorgan, a young sailor, from the shores of Kerry, or no, I am not aware; but it is not likely that many names have been enrolled in his pages more distinguished by a modest valour (such as contents itself with doing all for duty, and nothing for vanity), than that of the person we have just mentioned. The result of his professional exertions, and of a common-rate prudence (a rare naval virtue in the present day, and still more so at the time we speak of) was, the fortunate arrival of the young man on his native shores with a character unspotted by any act of insubordination or servility, and a quantity of prize-money sufficient

(and more than sufficient) to supply the "chair days" of his life, with every comfort that necessity suggested, and every luxury to which his limited experience in that way might induce him to aspire. There were circumstances, however, in his early life, which, independent of any view to mere personal gratification, made him feel happy in his competence.

"You are in the right," says the author of those well-known letters published in the name of Pope Ganganelli, "engraft the Italian gaiety upon the French: it is the way to live to a hundred." In like manner might his historian say of Duke Dorgan, that he engrafted the Irishman's gaiety upon the sailor's, and produced the blossoms of the one and the fruit of the other, in such abundance, as made him highly popular among his messmates. He was, to speak in less figurative language, a lively, handsome, clear headed, intelligent young person, with a round, well-moulded frame, bright auburn curling hair, and a hazel eye of excelling shrewdness, and when occasion required, of sparkling violence and resolution, indicating a mind of irregular strength, and a heart in which the passions had not been always subjected, notwithstanding the general even tenor of his life, to the most rigid discipline. But as the reader may observe throughout these tales, an ambition to render them almost as analogous to the drama as Fielding rendered his to the epic, (a circumstance in which the public taste seems, fortunately, to coincide with our inclination,) we shall allow our hero to introduce himself, in the fashionable manner, in the course of an incidental scene, which took place on the evening when his vessel arrived in the offing of Loup Head, the well-known point of land which forms the northern extremity of the shore that bounds the queen of Irish streams.

This part of the coast is remarkable for some wild and striking points of scenery, similar, in its general character, to those by which nearly the whole range of the south-

western coast is distinguished. The traveller is struck by the boldness and ruggedness of the lofty cliffs which oppose their rocky strength to the waves of the Atlantic, and by the magnitude of the caverns underneath, which, previous to the late vigorous exertions made by the guardians of the revenue, afforded a number of useful natural warerooms to the contrabandists who traded to and from the Flushing coast, and served at the same time as lurking-places to the seals, the hunting of which constituted, at that period, one of the chief sources of profit to the fishermen of the neighbouring villages. At a small distance from the light-house which is erected at the head, there stood during the war, one of those signal towers, by which telegraphic intelligence was transmitted round the Cape, as far as Cork, whenever a hostile sail ventured within the influence of an Irish breeze in the offing; and still farther in the direction of the river's source was the village of Kilbaha, whose commerce consisted then, as well as at present, in turf, transmitted by boats to the interior of the country. The coast is very thickly inhabited, and the people yet preserve in a great degree, the primitive and natural manners of their progenitors. They talk Irish—kill fish—go to sea in canoes—traffic in kind—eat potatoes and oaten bread—and exercise themselves in offices of kindness and hospitality towards strangers. This latter virtue has, however, in some parts of the region suffered injury from the efflux of bathers from the interior in the summer season, which taught them the use and convenience of ready money, in preference to their patriarchal modes of payment; and gave them, unfortunately, a more decided impression of its value than was consistent with the general character of Munster cottagers. The effect appears to have been similar to that which the liberality of English travellers has produced on the Continent.

But that portion of the country which constitutes the extreme south-west, and which is almost cut off from the remainder, by the large creek or bay of Seagh, which re-

duces it almost to a peninsula, presents a very remarkable contrast, in the condition and moral character of its inhabitants, to all the rest of Munster—perhaps we might say, Ireland. The country, though exceedingly bleak and wild at first sight, is found on further acquaintance to be well cultivated, producing oats, potatoes, and flax in considerable quantities. On ascending any eminence and looking around, the land appears to the traveller to be little better than one lonely waste of bog—the huts or mud cottages being of the general colour of the soil, and scarcely distinguishable from it, while the whole wears a dull and monotonous hue, to which the numerous turf-reeks scattered over the landscape contribute in a great degree. On closer observation, however, he begins to discern innumerable clusters of wigwam mud cabins, some of an unusual size, with thatched bee-hive roof, corded so as to provide against the winter storms. The inhabitants are all of one class; scarcely a single dwelling-house of what is termed a respectable appearance existing in the neighbourhood of the cottager—

"To shame the meanness of his humble shed."

They are contradistinguished from Irish landholders in general, by their apparent poverty and real wealth (many a tenant of clay walls being able without much inconvenience to give a dowry of some hundreds to his daughter)—as well as by their regular persevering industry—their extreme ignorance—their want of curiosity in all speculative matters—and their perfect unacquaintance with those popular themes of debate, which set all the rest of the island by the ears. They till their gardens quietly, as their fathers did before them—learn little and care for less—obey their priest in all reasonable matters, and pay him like princes—go to market with their oats and potatoes—eat—drink—dance—laugh—sleep, and die. They have no tyrants—no proctors—no middlemen—no demagogues—no meetings—no politics. Under whatever standard the horn of insurrection

is sounded through other parts of Ireland, whether under Rock, his lady, Starlight, Moonshine, or Moll Doyle, its echo dies into silence long before it has reached the peace-accustomed ears of this primitive people. Limited in their desires still more than in their enjoyments, the political condition of the country affects them but little—and they are silent even on the eternal topic of Catholic Emancipation. What is of the utmost advantage, so far as the peace and good order of the community is concerned, there are very few idle young men in the country—as the tillage of their gardens during one portion of the year, and the preparing of sand manure, of turf, marketing, and making *kelp* on the coast during the remainder, compel them to labour hard and continually. The tone of mind which the people display is certainly not in accordance with the magnificent natural wonders which abound on the coast, and of which the reader will find some sketches at their appropriate places in the body of the tale.

If, however, the object of all improvement in science or knowledge be to increase the happiness of men, it is very questionable, whether it would be acting the part of a friend to this people, to wish that they should be deprived of the bliss of ignorance and comfort in which they are at present shrouded—so far at least as the luxuries of life are concerned. Certainly, we express no inimical sentiment in hoping that it may be long before they are split and sundered into the unsocial distinctions of rank—before they prefer elegant poverty to humble comfort—before a selfish landlord (no unprecedented occurrence) shall scatter the peasantry from their happy, lowly homes—and yeomanize the soil.

On the evening when Dorgan's ship stood towards the mouth of the river, the inmates of the signal tower before mentioned were endeavouring to quicken the tardy-gaited hours of sunset, by all the contrivances which their tastes and opportunities could enable them to use. The lieutenant of the water-guards was quietly seated in his apartment

sipping a tumbler of what he called *stiff* punch—with his waistcoat thrown open, his legs stretched out, and a cooling sea breeze just fanning the long hair that shaded his red and jolly countenance. In the room underneath, were two sailors at draughts and grog, while outside the open window, seated on a wooden form, and basking in the evening sun, were a number of the guards, chatting with two or three rosy-cheeked girls who sat near them, blushing and smiling in all the conscious finery of clean caps and ribbons, and mincing out their few phrases of English to the best advantage—that being yet considered as a kind of holiday dialect in these districts.

"Oy say, you Paddy there with the halter about your waist (instead of your neck)," said one of the soldiers to a lean, pale-looking, sullen-eyed, hard, straight-lipped fellow, with a few staring locks of dank hair scattered on his brow, and a hay-rope tied sash-wise about his person—"Oy say, can you tell us what all them 'ere papishes are doing about the shore?

He pointed to several groups of the country-men, women, and children, who were employed in gathering heaps of a species of sea-weed among the rocks on the water's edge, at the little bay of Fodhra; while others were kneeling in prayer at different parts of the coast. The person to whom the querist addressed himself for information, seemed, by the more than equable indifference with which he listened to the insulting speech of the latter, to be one of those beaten-down characters, to whom degradation is so familiar, that they had rather lie tamely under the most contemptuous slights, than undergo the intolerable labour of supporting an independent and manly bearing. He possessed all (and more than all) the complaisance, without any of the confident and ready spirit of the Irish character—but underneath all the cringing servility of his manner—the ready obedience of eye and ear—and the musing, absent dulness of demeanour which formed the outer crust and pastry work of the

man, there was in his small gray eye, mouth close shut and forming one hard line across, thin straight hair, and meagre unfed cheek, an unpleasant depth of character, such as Julius Cæsar (that hater of lean and hungry looks) might not have loved to contemplate.

"Gathereu' the *dhoolamaun* they are, sir," he said in reply to the question of the guard. "Dhoolamaun," he continued, answering to the puzzled look of the latter—"that's a kind of say-weed that they take home wit 'em to boil and make greens of."

"Make *greens* of the *sea-weed!*" exclaimed the Englishman. "Well, come—that's a good un, however. Oy say, Jack!" addressing himself to one of the two sailors, who were still pursuing their game of draughts in a room behind, (with the rapidity peculiar to the naval adepts in this pastime,) "you come here and see what a bull Paddy has made."

"*Stall* the animal until I've done my game," replied the sailor. "I hnff your man, Tom; play on."

"Well, Paddy," continued the witty protector of his Majesty's colours, "and what are those folks doing on their marrow bones along the shore? Saying mass, eh?"

"Oh, not at all, sir—none could say that only a priest. They're sayen a prayer that way, sir, o' count o' Candlemas-day—a great feast, or *holliday*, sir—an ould custom they have."

"Are *you* a papish, Paddy?"

"Oyeh, then, I'm nothin' at all now, sir; I *was* a fish-joulter, but the times are hard wit uz," said the man with inimitable simplicity.

"A fish-jolter?" said the guard, "that's a sect I han't heard of. How should you like to go to sea, I say, you Irish Paddy?"

"He'd like it well enough," said the sailor, "if he could live the same lubber's life between decks, with nothing to do from morning to night but scold the cabin boy and kick

che cat into the lee scuppers. You Irish make tight sailors for all that. A king, Tom—crown him—back water there, man; you can't move your man that way."

A cry of "sail" from some person stationed overhead, interrupted this refined conversation, and drew the attention of the interlocutors to the waste of ocean which lay nursing its giant strength in a lulling calm before them. The signal was immediately hoisted on the tower, and answered by the vessel with the emblems of friendship. In a short time after, a small boat was lowered from her side, and manned for the shore. When she touched the beach, a young man in sailor's jacket and trowsers, with a small bundle in his hand, leaped lightly on shore, after shaking hands cordially with each of the crew in turn. They gave him a cheer as he ascended the rocks, which he answered by waving his hat several times in the air. The draught players and the group at the Tower, all but those on guard, sauntered towards the beach, leaving the countryman who had been the object of their mirth alone at the window.

He looked after them for some moments with a changed and darkening eye. "A sailor!" he exclaimed at length in soliloquy—"it's easy for 'em to talk, an' to laugh, an' be merry,—if they were as long without vittels as I am, I'll engage it would be a new story wit 'em. Go to *say*, says he?—Why then, I declare, 'twould be a'most as good as for me to be this way always. If it be a man's *luck* to be shot or drown'ded, sure better that at wanst than to be ever an always pullen ould Nick be the tail, from year's end to year's end. When Duke Dorgan went to *say* I was glad of it, because he left little Pennie M'Loughlen to myself, an' I thought when he'd be away that I'd have the field clear both with herself and the father. But in place o' that, here I am now driven out o' house an' home, an' all that's happenen Duke is to be out a harm's way at any rate. Here he stopp d and fixed his eye steadfastly on the young man before mentioned.

"There's an old saying, that if you talk o' the old boy himself, he'll appear, an' if that beant Duke Dorgan, or his ghost, walken eastwards, I'm dark, for certain. I'll try him nearer."

He hurried after the young sailor, who had taken the path leading towards Kilbaha, and was merrily pursuing his route, chanting in a quarter-deck key, a stave of the popular song of Willy Taylor, and his "lady free"—casting, as he sung, a rather anxious eye toward the waste of barren heath and sand which lay between him and the interior.

> "With that she called for sword and pistol,
> Which did come at her command—
> And she shot her Willie Taylor
> With his fair one in his hand."

"I say, messmate," he said as the countryman approached him—"can you tow me on the track of Carrigaholt?"

"The path is under your futt every step o' the way," said the man. Then after pacing behind him in silence for a few minutes—"Why then, for one that puts out the futt so slow, I never seen any body carry so much o' the road wit 'em,* as you do, Mr. Duke, Lord bless you."

"You know me?" said the other, turning and fixing his eyes on the speaker, then with an air of greater reserve, as he recognized the face—"and I ought to know you, too. That face is Pryce Kinchela's—if you haven't stole it from him."

"I wish that was all I had belongen to Pryce Kinchela about me," said the man heavily.

"I am glad to see you, Pryce."

"I don't know whether you are or not, Duke; but I'm glad to see *you*—although you may well doubt my word. I am an altered man since you left the country—and the foolish spite that you an' I had then about Pennie Mac Loughlen—(the Silver Penny as you called—an the Luck

* Make so great progress.

Penny as I called her) is no more than boy's play, to the cause I got since from others. That girl, Duke, was no Luck Penny to either you or me. After her father refused you, an' you went to sea—sure what do you think o' me but med up to her, an' if I did you'd think it was to threaten to murder her I did, the father got so wild—an' ever after he kep persecuten me right and left, until he didn't lay me a leg to stand on. If you're not tired, an' would wish to rest a piece here on this rock, I'll tell you how it was."

Dorgan complied—although the lengthening shadows on the sand and the freshening breeze of the sharp February evening advised him of the necessity of securing some place of shelter for the night.—Fearful of over-burthening the reader with the quaint idiom of the country—of which perhaps, a superabundance must be thrown into these histories—I shall, while Pryce is detailing his story to our young hero, inform him, in more intelligible language, of the nature of the incidents which had reduced him to his present discontented condition of mind, and furnish a slight sketch of his character—both being mournfully illustrative of the state of Munster life in his rank.

Those, perhaps, who are fond of arguing on the existence of innate propensities in the human mind, which no influence of education, circumstances, or volition can oversway, might find reason to alter their opinion, if an opportunity were afforded of tracing the history of the individual nature which formed the subject of disquisition back to its earliest impulse, either toward good or evil. However casuists may assert (in the face of honesty, and common sense,) that the very exertion of the will itself which induces us to adopt any evil course is a species of compulsion, which relieves us in justice from responsibility, there is not one even of those sensible fellows, who, in regretting an evil action, which he had thus under the tyranny of his own free will been compelled to commit, will dare to say to his own secret consciousness that he *could* not have held his hand at the mo-

ment that he knowingly acted ill. As the royal astrologer, however, says of the planets, in *La vida es Sueno*, that they incline, but do not compel the conduct of men, so might it be said of the influence of the exterior circumstances of life upon the human character—and judging from the general indolence of mankind in resisting the influence of those circumstances, it might be safely conjectured that the common routine of Munster cottage life and education would produce that recklessness of blood and outrage among *any* people, with which it has of late years been fashionable to charge the inhabitants of this quarter of Ireland—as a *natural propensity*. The two individuals whom we have just introduced to our readers, presented instances to the effect of those circumstances, both in different ways. They were both taught to fight their own battles in childhood, both were instructed in the mysteries of the "Reading-made-easy," under the same hedge-school tyrant, a low ruffian, who, for the small sum of two and sixpence, or more Hibernically speaking, three tenpennies a quarter, undertook to pull their hair, break deal rulers (or *sthrokers*) upon their little hands, lift them up by the ears for the slightest orthographical mistake, lash their naked and bleeding shins three times a day with a huge birchen rod, by way of stimulating them to greater application, and teach them to read and write into the bargain. The manner in which the two boys acted under this treatment was very different. Pryce seldom complained, even to a school-fellow, of the torture which was inflicted on him: sometimes his lip trembled and a tear stood in his eye when the pain given was extreme, but generally the patience and fortitude of endurance which he showed, was such as to touch even the rocky heart of the Munster Dionysius with remorse. Duke, on the contrary, was a loud and noisy rebel; he kicked, plunged, remonstrated, threatened murder and assassination, and a thousand other things, which redoubled his afflictions, and which were forgotten by himself as soon as the latter were sus-

pended. On three or four occasions, however, when the pedagogue had been particularly severe on both boys, he received on his way home through a wood in the neighbourhood a blow from a heavy stone, discharged by some secret hand, which never failed to draw blood in profusion from his head, and at one time inflicted such a wound as considerably to endanger his life. His suspicions naturally fell on Duke, but to his astonishment and mortification, the clearest *alibi* was always made out for the boy, and no possible investigation could lead to the real delinquent. There was no doubt that one of his pupils was the criminal, but whoever he might be, he kept the triumph of his revenge, contrary to the usual wont of school-boys, a secret from the whole world. Duke, nevertheless, did not at any time attempt to conceal his satisfaction at the occurrence.

Another circumstance placed the dispositions of the youths in singular apposition. Among the little girls who occupied the row of round stones placed along the wall opposite to the boys, was a little flaxen-haired coquette named Penelope M'Loughlen, whose blue eyes and cherry lips had made sad work in the hearts of the young dabblers in etymology. Their affection, however, was manifested in a very different manner. While Duke fought for her, carried her over streams and ditches and treated her to an occasional "hayporth" of sugar-candy—Pryce mended her *feque*,* folded her thumb-paper, and taught her the analogy between C and half a griddle, H and a haggard-gate; so that like the wavering mistress of the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, her affections were divided between the manly frankness, courage, and generosity of the former, and the silent attentions and profound learning of the latter lover. As they approached the years of manhood (he is a long-lived Irishman that reaches those of discretion,) the relation of the parties towards each other continued almost the same; but that of

* Used in pointing the letters out—Orthographically—*fescue*.

the lady to them was altered. Her heart, according as its capability of discriminating and appreciating the worth of character became more acute, inclined toward the side of the frank and hearty Duke. He was, to use a homely but forcible metaphor which is popular in her country, "that kind of man that the wrong side of him was turned out every day," while her womanly shrewdness told her that she had not yet seen more than the sunny half of his rival. She ventured, with the due proportion of maiden reluctance and timidity, to confess this preference to the enraptured Duke, and with true filial spirit had her partiality ripened into passion lasting and immoveable, when her lover proposed for her and was scornfully rejected by her father. Duke went to sea, and Kinchela, after beating about the point with the caution which his rival's experience had taught him to use, tried his luck with no better success. It was indeed reported for some time after in the neighbourhood that his rejection had been still more unceremonious than poor Dorgan's—a rumour which was probably founded on the fact that Penny never heard the circumstance alluded to without smothering a laugh, and that the old man (who was rather fiery in his temper) sent the shoe of his right foot to be mended the same evening, with a rent about the toe, which showed as if considerable violence had been used with it. After this, Pryce had been, up to the present time, falling from cliff to cliff downward through the dark vale of adversity, until he found himself at last stretched, fairly baffled and spirit-broken, at the bottom.

"And you take it so tamely!" exclaimed the young sailor, when Pryce had come to a close,—"I would have given the fellow a rope's end at any rate, if not round the neck, across the shoulders at least."

"Is that *all* you'd do to him?" asked Pryce, quietly.

"All! 'tis more, it seems, than you'd do—but you were ever an' always a poor patient *slob*."

"Was I?" said Kinchela, with a smile, the expression of

which, from his turning away his head while he spoke, it was evident he did not wish to give Duke an opportunity of speculating upon. "But I believe 'tis time for us to think of parting, Mr. Dorgan. If you stop in Carrigaholt to-morrow at the Bee-hive, you'll see me there before you and we'll have a little more *crusheening* together, yourself, an' myself; I have a call to make westwards before I go."

They parted—and Dorgan pursued his route, not without a certain feeling of contempt for the easy indifference with which his former rival sustained the spirit-rousing slights that had been cast upon him. These unpleasant feelings, however, were soon displaced by anticipations, such as might naturally be supposed to occur to a young and ardent heart on its return from a long exile to the home and the friends of his early life. He felt perfectly assured that old M'Loughlen could not resist the influence of the wealth and honour he had acquired during many years of service, as eventful and perilous (for the deck which he trod was that which called Nelson captain,) as ever British seamen braved; and as he was himself eminently tinged with that "forgive-and-forget" spirit which forms one of the characteristics of his nation, he looked forward with an impatient generosity to the hour of reconciliation. He turned aside in fancy from the father's rough hand-shake and repentant greeting, to the blushing cheek and joyous eye of his now womanly Penny, whom he pictured to himself standing bashfully behind her father, and waiting with a throbbing heart and trembling frame to meet him with a true love welcome. As he thought of those things he doubled his pace, and made the sand hills flit so rapidly behind him, that the traces of the outer coast were presently lost, and the sound of the distant waste of ocean came faint and far upon his ear.

The February evening soon began to draw to a close, and the wind, which blew from the sea, acquired a sharpness and coldness which furnished Dorgan with an additional though less sentimental reason for quickening his steps. He was

almost in a solitude—the clouds began to lower and darken upon his path—while the occasional scream of a horse-gull as it swooped around him, and with difficulty upheld its light and feathery bulk against the rising wind, together with the dreary whistling of that wind itself as it wafted over his head the sea-foam that was broken on the cliffs at half-a-mile distant, formed the only sounds that varied the dead monotony of the scene around him. The absence of public roads, moreover (for this was long before Mr. Killala, the excellent engineer, was sent to visit this part of the country,) contributed to throw an air of greater wildness and loneliness over its surface, so that Dorgan felt by no means at his ease when the darkness, which speedily banished the reflection of the last ray of sunset from the sky, left him to grope his way, without a pilot, through this trackless waste of gloom. His eyes, accommodating their power of vision in some time to the darkness which at first seemed almost equivalent to blindness, enabled him, after a few hours' hard walking, to discover at a little distance one of those miserable huts which but too often forms the only asylum in which the poor Munster cottager can find a refuge from the tyranny of the "winter's flaw." The softness of the soil beneath his feet informed him, moreover, that he had arrived on better cultivated land, while at the same time a disparting of the vapours above enabled him to discover, a few perches from the place where he stood, a comfortable-looking farm house, with a *haggard*,* stored with two or three stacks of hay and reed. Unwilling to disturb at so unseasonable an hour the slumbering inmates of the dwelling, and uncertain, besides, of the reception he might meet with, Dorgan resolved to spend the remainder of the night in the dry and still recess formed by the grouping of the stacks. He stepped over the haggard stile, and, after shaking down some of the sweet hay on the ground, he flung

* Hay-yard.

himself at full length on this simple natural couch, placed his bundle under his head, and was speedily lost in the wilderness of monkey-visions among which the unchained fancy of the sleeper loves to exercise her magic skill.

We cannot afford, nevertheless, to sit long idly by our hero while he slumbers, so that the reader will have the complaisance to imagine the winter-night already past, and the summons of the "early" cock shrilling in his vexed and drowsy ear. As he awoke and turned on his rude pallet, the murmuring of human voices within a few feet of the spot where he lay, arrested his attention. He listened, almost unconscious of what he was doing, and totally forgetful of its impropriety, while the following conversation passed between two speakers. The voices were those of females; one of them, from the sweetness and richness of the tones, a young—and the other, from the harshness and hard vulgarity of the accent, evidently an old woman.

"I walked," said the younger, in a tone of gentle discontent and remonstrance, "three miles to meet you here since the day-dawn, and I must be back again and have the cows spancelled, and the milk set, and the men's breakfast ready before my father gets up; for if he knew I came to see you, he'd kill me. And here you kept me a whole hour waiting for you."

"Don't blame me, avourneen," was the soothing reply; "I am an old woman, and you're so young, that your blood is running yet like cherry-brandy in your veins. When you see as much of the harm that's done in the day-light as I have, darlen, you won't be in such a hurry to shorten the night as you were this mornen."

"Well, let us say no more of it. You told me last night, before my father came in and found you in the kitchen, that you could tell me secrets that nobody knew but myself."

"What else did I get my gift for? When I was an infant at the breast, my mother *gay* me, by the directions of

an *apparrishun* that she seen, three drops of a cow's first milk after calving, before the young came a near her, and that's the reason the gift is upon me now."

"Tell me, then," and here the girl hesitated a moment, "tell me, till I try you. Have I a sweetheart or no?"

It needed not a ghost come from the grave to solve this profound question, and so thought Duke Dorgan, as he recognised in the elder female, from the tenor of the conversation, one of a class of idle and worse than idle characters. Their trade it was, and is (though the increasing knowledge of the peasantry in other parts of the country has rendered their profits much less considerable than they were,) to wander from house to house, defrauding silly cottage girls, and, rumour asserts, some silly men too, of their hardly-earned moneys under the pretence of giving them a fi'-penny or a tenpenny peep into futurity, according to the length of their purses and their curiosity. The means which these worthies most commonly used to arrive at a knowledge of "coming events" was some mystical calculation on a pack of cards; and instances have fallen within the circle of our own experience where those "Card-drawers," as they are popularly termed, were permitted and invited to exercise their skill in gull-catching in other than cottage company. But to continue our tale.

"Reach me your hand, darlen," said the Card-drawer, "ont'l I feel your pulse a piece." There was a pause of a few minutes, when she resumed. "The blood beats warm, but it doesn't come from the heart. Your heart is not your own, and the boy that has it is far away from you."

A gentle exclamation of astonishment from the young inquirer showed that the Card-drawer had judged right.

"Tell me news of him," was the next request, made in panting eagerness; if it be good I will give you another half-crown."

"Oy, indeed!" said the Card-drawer, with an affected

indignation, "as if all the silver in your purse, although it was as long as the king's, that they say if you held one end of it and I held another, we never 'nd meet, would make bad good or good bad." Here Dorgan heard the shuffling of a pack of cards. "We'll try what it is, any way. Draw a card, an' face the east. What is it?"

"The king o' diamonds."

"Gondoutha! Good. Draw again. Well?"

"The ace o' hearts."

"Allilu! better an' better again. Why, draw once more."

"The queen o' spades."

"That's yourself. All good. Your lover is comen' home with a sighth o' money, and as fond o' you as ever."

"I thank you, and you're a good creature," said the young female, in accents that were broken by the agitation of delight. "Hush! I hear something stirring near us. Good morning, the sun is high, and I'll be killed if my father finds me out, when he gets up."

"Stay one moment, a-gra-gal. You forget that trifle you wor talken' of. 'Tisn't for the sake o' the lucre I'd talk, but as we were mentionen' it at all—"

"Oh, the half-crown? I had quite forgot it, I declare. Here it is, my good woman. If what you say comes to pass, I will make that a great deal more; if you have been only deceiving me, because I am young, and my heart foolish and credulous, may Heaven forgive you for it! it would be doing no better than to put a blind man on a wrong path."

"An' there's few that would do that, a-colleen," said the Card-drawer, as turning full within Dorgan's sight, while he heard the young girl, whom she had been duping, trip lightly through the rushes, she put the piece of silver in a corner of her handkerchief, made a knot about it, and thrust it into her dark and withered bosom. Before she

discovered him, as he lay stretched on the hay, our hero had a full opportunity of observing her face and figure: and as forming one of a class of persons who exercised a considerable influence over the minds of the peasantry of her country, the reader perhaps will allow us to present a brief sketch of what he saw, in defiance of Meg Merrilies and all her bony sisterhood.

It is almost impossible to conceive how so many shreds and rags could hang together as composed this woman's dress. There did not appear to be two square inches about her in one piece, and her whole costume shook in the morning wind like the foliage of a tree, yet she had even a warm and comfortable look. Duke never saw in his life before such a mountain of rags. How they were all united puzzled him more than the mystery of the tides of Negropont did the Stagyrite. Her shoes, or more properly (if they must have a name) her *brogues*, were in pieces, yet her feet were perfectly covered—partly with straw thrust into the fissures made in the leather, and in part with the fragments of an old woollen stocking. To find a name for each article of clothing which she wore would have been impossible. She had, to speak truly, neither gown, nor petticoat, nor cloak—yet clad she was from top to toe, and that fully. It seemed as if her dress had been built up about her from the ground of all manner of fragments. Her head-dress, as it was simple, was less equivocal than the rest of her costume. It consisted of a large red and yellow handkerchief, under which her gray hair rolled up on something similar to what ladies call a *Johnny*, was fastened—so as to present an appearance like that of a very low fête; two corners of the kerchief were tied under her peaked and lengthened chin, while the others were suffered to flutter in the wind, or hang idly over the back of her head. Over her right shoulder was thrown a number of hare, kid, and rabbit skins, together with a bundle of unclarified goose-quills, both of which she had picked up in her peregrina-

tions for a trifle, to dispose of them at a due profit to the skin and feather merchants of St. John's Gate, in Limerick,—this forming the ostensible calling under cover of which she carried on her more lucrative trade of "card drawing," or telling of fortunes.

The features of the Card-drawer, were calculated by their expression to aid her considerably in the efforts which she made to acquire an influence over the weak credulous minds of those who were accustomed to consult her. The small weasel eyes, set at an extraordinary distance from each other, in which a person of common penetration could have discovered nothing more than the light of that "crooked wisdom," usually denominated cunning, which is so useful to persons of her profession, seemed to her wondering dupes to be full of a piercing sagacity, and a certain mysterious lustre, which made their hearts stir uneasily within them. Her forehead was broad and tanned by continual exposure to the weather—her nose flat and yet large, presenting, together with the disagreeable breadth of space, of which it formed the centre between the eyes, something of the cast of countenance for which that race of Italians are remarkable, who are said to be the direct and lineal descendants of the old Romans. Her mouth appeared to be otherwise occupied than in affording Duke an opportunity of observing its proportions, for it was fast shut upon a pipe, the bowl of which was fastened on the barrel of a quill, that being a more capacious conductor of the comfortable fume, than the narrow earthen tube originally affixed to it.

She started, when she saw Dorgan stretched on his hay couch between the stacks, and gazing steadily on her. "Why, then, heaven bless you, child, but that's a dhroll place for you to be lyen; is it all night you wor out that way?"

"Tell me," said Dorgan, rising and taking his bundle, without attending to, indeed without hearing her question,

—"who was that young girl, that I heard speaking to you, just now?"

"I'm afear'd," said the Card-drawer, looking at him askance with one of her eyes, "you're in a greater hurry to hear that than I am to tell you. Would you make a betrayer o' me?"

"Not I, indeed," said Duke, "nor do I wish you to answer the question, if there be any confidence between you and her."

And turning on his heel, he was going to jump on the stile, leading to the common footpath, when the old woman called to him.

"Easy a while, sailor! Would you like to have a body tell your forten?"

"My fortune?" said Duke, with a laugh,—"Go, you old rogue, did you think I'm one of your woodcocks? How would a sinner like you (if it isn't judging you—but we're all sinners) come into the knowledge of heaven's secrets?"

"Oyeh, who pretends to any knowledge of 'em? I'm sure *I* don't. I see nothen—I hear nothen—I know nothen —'Tis all in this pack o' cards, it is. You draw for yourself—all I'll do, is to tell you what it is; I know no more o' you, than you do yourself, till you draw, an' then the cards 'll tell us."

Although Dorgan had very little of the superstitious credulity which is common to most sailors, in his composition, he was not destitute of a certain portion of youthful curiosity. He paused a moment, his hand resting on the stile while he surveyed the old woman with a gaze of mingled condescension and smiling incredulity.—"And what must I pay for your nonsense, old lady?"

"May I never die in sin, If I'd ask anythen more genteel and off-hand, than that dollar that's danglen be the ribbon to the breast o' your coat."

"Dollar!" Dorgan exclaimed with another loud laugh. "You exorbitant hag! Would you have me sell you my

laurels? This is my Trafalgar medal." And he gazed on it with an eye in which fondness and pride were mingled.

The Card-drawer drew back respectfully, and curtsied to the very ground.—If you were one of Nelson's sailors," said she,—"that great lord, that all the world is in mourning for, this way, I'll take nothen from you. Here draw your fate an' welcome."

"I will," replied Dorgan,—"but not gratis, my good woman. Here," putting a half-crown into her hand, and assuming a more cordial manner (which I request my reader will not attribute to the flattering humility of the Card-drawer's demeanour)—"put up this—and let me draw my fate, as you call it."

"The heavens bless your honour; face the east, sir. Well what have you drawn?"

"A scoundrelly, bandy-legged knave o' clubs."

"I am sorry for you, young man," said the Card-drawer, in a tone of deep concern. "Draw again, sir, and hope for better luck. Well, what card is that?"

"The same squint-eyed knave, as I'm alive. Is there ill-look in the fellow's phiz?"

"You must draw three cards, before I can answer any questions. Here!—there is but one other chance between you and a very ill forten. Well, is there any better luck now?"

Dorgan drew a third time, and started back when he looked on the card, as if he had seen a ghost.

"I insist," said he vehemently, "on seeing the pack—there are none but knaves o' clubs in your hands."

"O shame an' sorrow, *asthora-ma-chree*, why should you say such a thing as that?—see, yourself. Isn't that a fair an' honest pack o' cards? 'Tisn't to draw the knave o' clubs agin you done, is it?"

"I'll be hanged if I haven't though," said Duke, troubled and fretted in spite of himself at the singular coincidence—which he perhaps too readily believed to be uncontrived on the part of the old woman.

"You'll be hanged if you *have*, you ought to say," she replied, assuming a solemn earnestness of tone and look.

"I *will*, be hanged then," said the sailor—"for there is the card."

"Whoever you are," the Card-drawer replied, after shaking her head and looking steadfastly at him for a few moments, "you are a free-handed, spirited boy, an' my heart within me is sorry for you. If you left your ship for fear of a sailor's grave, you may return to her again, for your doom is not to be upon the waters. There's a theatnen of a voylent an' a shame-death in the card you drew. If you have a spite agin any body, or if it be a thing any body would have the likes again you, I tell you, an warn you to beware an look about you. Feel your way before you, for a black doom is waiten for you. Once more I advise you, look well to yourself, an' dale quietly wit all people. Good mornen to you, lad, and heaven send you better luck then you're promised—an' a rough road, porcupine saddle, an' a high-trotten horse to all your inimies." And so saying, the old woman conconcealed the cards in some part of her dress, and hurried through the haggard, muttering, as soon as she passed out of hearing, "There why! May be I didn't make you pay for your peepen, for once. He has something to think of now to keep his mind from harm, any way."

Although we have before said that Duke Dorgan was by no means feeble-minded, or idly credulous, it would be claiming for him, perhaps, a vigour of intellect which is but little characteristic of the members of his class of society, in any country in the world, if we asserted, that he was incapable of being at all influenced by circumstances so unimpressive as those which he had just undergone. The coincidence in the thrice selected card (in which, probably, the more penetrating reader can discover nothing farther than the roguish dexterity of a cunning old beldame) if it did not appear to him as a really supernatural occurrence, at

least made him think very deeply on the subject, and mingled itself with her explanation and prophecy, to which it imparted a strangely corroborative weight. We might appeal to the experience of many of our most philosophical and apathetic readers, to say, whether they have not often found trains of thought or feeling which they at first assumed in indifference or in jest, grow and fasten on their attention, in a degree which was entirely the reverse of trifling or agreeable. In like manner fared our hero: the longer he dwelt on the Card-drawer and her prophecy, the more ill at ease he grew—until at length he wished, from the bottom of his heart, that he never exchanged a word with her. He was astonished at the feverish state of mind which very speedily grew upon him—"I don't believe a word of it," he said remonstrating with himself—"and as to the old woman herself—of course she is an impostor. I should be worse than an idiot, to be at all influenced by any thing she could tell me—nor am I—but yet to draw that long-nosed knave o' clubs three times!—No matter! time will tell."

He sprang lightly over the stile, and, bundle in hand, speedily lost recollection of his morning adventure in the varieties of the scenes through which he passed, on his route towards his native village—and the home of his love. The country around him was level, boggy, and uncultivated, with but scanty exceptions; and the occasional companions of his journey were the blue-stockinged fish-jolters, from the neighbouring villages of Beltard and Quern (famous for the delicious turbot, which philanthropically incarcerated themselves in the fishing-nets, for the benefit of the gourmands of Clare and Limerick).

The rough-looking merchants who dealt in such delicious ware beat on their rough-coated asses, as they staggered under the weight of their well-furnished *cleaves* or paniers, and diversified the monotony of the sweet and wholesome sea air, with what Trinculo would call a "most ancient and

fish-like smell." Now and then, too, a pig-jobber, distinguished by his weather-proof air, his ponderous frieze great-coat, with standing collar, forming a strong wall of defence up to the very eyes—his wide waste of cape, and his one spur fastened upon the well-greased brogue, vouchsafed a "save you kindly," as he trotted by; and a carman, seated sidewise on the back of a horse, (whose bony ribs bespoke him innocent of the luxury of oats)—with his feet on the shaft, a cart-whip tied sashwise about his person from shoulder to hips, a dingy straw hat flung "on three hairs" of his head, heavy woollen waistcoat, bundle-cloth shirt thrown open at the neck, and light streamers of gray ribbon fluttering rakishly at the knees of his corduroy small clothes,—hospitably invited him to take a seat on the corner of his car, loaded as it was with full-bounds of butter, or bags of oats for the inland markets.

Duke was tempted to loiter so much on his way, that the sun was past its meridian height for some time before he entered the village of Carrigaholt, within little more than a mile of which Mr. M'Loughlen, the father of his beloved Penny, resided. He had previously come to the determination of allowing himself one evening to recruit his spirits and recover his good looks, before he should present himself at the farm-house. Though he had but little vanity himself, and had a reasonable share of confidence in the affections of his love, he had lived long enough among mankind, to know, that even our best and nearest friends are seldom so purely disinterested as not to acknowledge an involuntary and tacit subjection to the influence of appearances. Penny, he conjectured (and he did not think the worse of her for the suspicion) would not like him the less in his smart new jacket and trowsers, with a light India silk handkerchief about his neck, and the wearing effects of long travel flung from him by a night's repose. The old gentleman, he was certain, would be much better pleased to see him in a respectable trim; and he was conscious moreover, though he

did not make this one of his ostensible motives, that he would not be the less satisfied with himself for appearing *point device.*

The village, as he entered it, appeared almost deserted —the masters of the families not being yet returned from their daily toil on the river which flowed near them. The doors of the houses were, for the most part, shut fast and hasped, which circumstance, together with the stillness of the streets, in which he only heard the voices of some ragged children at play among the turf kishes, and the occasional inhospitable growling of some hairy cur (who was afraid to venture on a bark of open defiance or hostility in the absence of its human protectors,) gave something of a holiday air to the scene. Between the occasional breaks in the row of houses on one side, the broad and sheeted river presented itself to his eyes, its surface agreeably diversified by the dark and red-sailed fishing boats, turf-boats, and large merchant-vessels which floated on its bosom, and the shadow of a passing cloud on its green and sunny waters.

As he proceeded through the village in search of the house which Kinchela had indicated as a rendezvous, he observed the sign-boards of two rival public-houses, swinging at either corner of the street, at a spot where it was intersected by two cross-roads.

Both were distinguished by those whimsical devices and mottoes, used generally in Ireland for the purpose of exciting mirth in the hearts of the passengers—those adepts in the human character, the innkeepers, being made aware by long experience, that, next to passionate grief, nothing inclines a man more strongly to look for good liquor and good company, than a train of good humour once set on fire within his heart. One of those signs presented the appearance of a pewter drinking vessel imprisoned within the grating of a strong gaol, under which the following lines were written in a bold dashing hand :—

Ye jovial fellows that pass along,
Behold me here, in prison strong,
For Four pence *I in chains do lie*
Release me quickly, or I shall Die.'

On the rival sign-board, the Muse of pa'nting had delineated the effigy of a bee-hive, which had likewise its appropriate jingle contributed by her sister deity :—

"Within this hive
We're all alive;
Good liquor makes us funny—
If you are dry
As you pass by,
Step in and taste our honey."

With the latter invitation our hero complied, leaving the liberation of the captive on the other side to the next village Howard who might cast a humane eye in that direction, moved less, however, by the prospect of the promised honey within, than the expectation of meeting here his old acquaintance before named.

He found the house unoccupied by any but the *publican* or landlord, who was seated, in a hay-bottomed chair, by the whitening embers of a turf fire, dandling one foot softly in the air, and luxuriating in the delights of a well-filled pipe, which he interrupted only at intervals, for the purpose of giving some directions to a slatternly girl, who was seated on her heels at one end of the room, scouring the pewter glories of the dresser with a wisp of hay and wet sand. He received Dorgan with the respect and attention which are peculiarly the right of all naval and military sojourners at places of amusement, ushered him into the boarded parlour, and answered readily all the questions which he put respecting the present condition of M'Loughlen, whether he still lived with his daughter, in the same lonely house which they occupied a great many years before, and many other inquiries more interesting to him, in all probability, than they would be to the reader.

The landlord was at length summoned to attend a customer at the bar, and Duke was left to "discuss" (as the phrase is) his whiskey-and-water (or to give it the provincial term his whiskey-punch) alone. Although Irishmen have long lain under the imputation of a fondness more intense than is consistent with the character of a well-deserver, for the excitement of strong liquor, I believe the affection which subsists, is rather that which we entertain for a pleasant acquaintance, whom we are happy to meet in mixed company, than that which we feel towards a friend with whom we can consume whole hours in solitary communion (if this expression may escape uncensured by English judgments). Dorgan in particular, who was unprofessionally and unnationally abstemious, felt little pleasure in continuing, while he waited the arrival of his friend, to sip the diluted fire which stood before him. He looked around the room for something to amuse his thoughts, which were flowing too rapidly upon him, to suffer that he should remain still, until Pryce made good his appointment; and after turning over a few old books of farming, tattered volumes of law, and rudimental works, a scrap-book fell into his hands, in which he found the following verses written (in all probability by way of practice in penmanship). Although the sentiment was expressed in language, perhaps, a little too fine for his sympathy, the analogy which it bore to what might have been his own fate, interested him sufficiently to make him read the stanzas through.

THE JOY OF HONOUR.

I.

The tears from these old eyelids crept,
When Dermod left his mother-land—
And I was one of those who wept
Upon his neck, and press'd his hand.
He did not grieve to leave us then,
He hop'd to see his home again—
With honours twin'd in his bright hair,
He *could* not hope to gather there.

II.

Year after year rolled fleetly on—
Lost in the grave of buried time—
And Dermod's name and praise had won
Their way into his parent-clime;
But all his youthful haunts were changed,
The wild wood perished where he ranged—
And all his friends died one by one,
Till the last of Dermod's name was gone.

III.

I sat, one eve, in Curra's glade,
And saw an old man tottering down,
Where the first veil of evening's shade
Had given the heath a deeper brown;
His cheek was pale—his long hair now
Fell, in white flakes, o'er his aged brow—
But the same young soul was in his eye,
And I knew the friend of my infancy.

IV.

He gazed upon the silent wood—
He passed his hand across his brow—
The hush of utter solitude
Slept on each breathless beechen bough—
"That lake with flowering islets strewed,
That skirts the lawn and breaks yon wood—
I knew in youth a valley green,
The seat of many a merry scene.

V.

"The youths that graced the village dance,
Beneath the turf they trod are sleeping—
The maidens, in whose gentle glance
Their spirits lived, are o'er them weeping—
Sorrow and blight, and age have come—
Where mirth once reigned – and youth—and bloom—
And the soft charms of Nature's prime
Are blasted by the breath of Time.

VI.

"And hath the joy that honour gives,
No power o'er memories like this?
Ah! witless is the man who lives
To soar at fame and spurn at bliss!

That hath been mine—*this* might have been,
Had I but held the humble mean—
And passed upon my parent soil
A life of peace and quiet toil.

VII.

"And is it thus with *all* who gain
The phantom glory of a name?
That ere it grace their brows, the pain
Of their long search hath quench'd the flame
That young ambition lit—and those
Whose praise they sought, are at repose—
And they stand in a world unknown—
Admired—revered—unloved—alone!

VIII.

"I want my early playmates back,
My friends long lost—but ne'er forgot—
Are these old men who haunt my track,
My school-day friends?—I know them not!
Alas! I grieve and call in vain—
Their youth will never come again;
But it is sad my heart should feel
Its first affections youthful still."

"I declare, then," said Dorgan in soliloquy, as he mingled another "tumbler o' punch" (the first having insensibly disappeared, while he was poring studiously over the above composition), and looked musingly in the glass, only a *little* puzzled—"I declare, now, I can understand what the fellow means very well, although he has put it into that crinkum-crankum, fine-spoken, gingerbread language; and I felt just the same thing myself since I came. This very landlord o' this public-house I knew at school—a wild, scatter-brained young fellow, that would box a round, or climb at a magpie's nest with any boy in the parish, and to see him now enter the room, knocking the ashes off his pipe with the tip of his little finger, hoping your honour is *convenient*, and talking of the duty on licences and the distillery laws, as if he had never done anything since he was born but *jug* whiskey punch, and score

double! It makes a man feel as if he were thinking of growing old, one time or another, himself. Going to 'lie beneath the turf I trod,' as this poet here says. No matter!" he continued, indulging in a more liberal draught than he had yet ventured on, "this is the way of the world—*sic transit gloria mundi;* here to-day and gone o' Sunday. Hush! Is not that Kinchela?"

He interrupted himself, on hearing a voice in the kitchen outside. The speaker approached the door of the room where he sat, and entering without ceremony, showed him that his conjecture was perfectly correct.

"I beg pardon, Mr. Dorgan," he said, making what he considered a very courteous bow—"I'm afeer'd I *kep* you waiten, but I was obleeged to be at the Head all the mornen, gatheren the barnocks*—an' I couldn't well afford to lose more than half a day to our meeten this turn."

Dorgan accepted his apology, and invited him to a corner of the board, and a share of the good things with which it was decorated. Pryce readily seated himself, but refused to drink, and when our hero pressed him hard, added vehemence to the negative.

"O come," said Duke, angrily, "I will say that you do not yet look on me as a friend if you refuse to join me in a glass. There's no salt in the liquor—and you may be my foe to-morrow, if you like."

"Pho! pho! sooner than you'd be sayen anything o' that kind, Duke," the other said, with some confusion of manner, "I'll drink the ocean dry wit you." And he filled a glass without further preamble.

After the usual commendations on the quality of the materials which went to the composition of their popular beverage, the young men talked freely of the changes which had taken place in the affairs of the neighbourhood, dwelling on the intermediate histories of all whose fortunes were of any interest to the sailor from their association with his

* A kind of shell-fish.

early life, comparing their actual fates with what might have been anticipated from his knowledge of their character in boyhood—how one was married—another hanged—one killed at a hurling match—another transported for sheep-stealing—wondering at every circumstance in turn, and at length chopping round (to use the professional phrase of one of the parties) upon the old and favourite theme of M'Loughlen and his daughter.

On this subject, Dorgan, a little stimulated by the awakened recollection of the slights cast upon him by the old farmer; and not a little, perhaps, by the influence of the Irish whiskey, to which he had become almost a stranger during his exile, allowed himself a liberty of speech which he had afterward deep cause to regret. Pryce, after coinciding in the justice of his resentment, and even adding some observations calculated rather to aggravate than assuage it, suddenly changed his tone, and said in a gentle voice:—

"But although he did injure you surely, Duke, an' that greatly, I'd like I could prevail on you to forgive and forget. Bear an' forbear as we're commanded. He's an old man, an' you're a young one, and it won't be long until the grave will draw a line between ye, that you may wish to pass, to make friends again, an' won't be able. So don't harbour any bad designs again' poor M'Loughlen, I beg o' you."

"Oh, I'll make the purse-proud old rogue know at any rate that——" he interrupted himself, on perceiving a dark shadow thrown on the table at which he was seated. On looking up, he perceived an elderly gentleman, dressed in black, with whip and spurs, and silver buckles at his knees, standing between him and the window. He addressed Dorgan with a manner of solemn and authoritative, although very mild and dignified reproof.

"I have been listening to you," said he, "for the last few minutes——"

"Have you?" interrupted Duke, "then you have made more free than welcome, I can tell you."

"Do not condemn me as an eaves-dropper," said the gentleman, calmly, "until you are certain that I deserve the name. I did not intend to overhear you; but if I had used so unwarrantable a means to serve you, young man, you should respect your Maker more than to insult his minister."

"I really ask your pardon," said Dorgan, rising—"I was not aware of your profession, father, or I would not have used these words."

"There was a fault on both sides," said the clergyman —"however, before I go (as I only stepped in here, in the expectation of meeting a friend,) I will venture to pursue the subject a little farther. I heard you speak in terms of strong resentment of one of my worthiest parishioners. There is not a man of his means and station in the country who has done more good to the poor, and to all who needed his service, than that very man. He is a fond father—a religious observer of God's law—and a friend to all—even to you—(do not start, for I know you, sir,) who are no friend of his. I have often heard him mention, with deep regret, the hard language he used towards you in his younger and more passionate days—and yet this is the man whom you denounce by an epithet, which it does not become me to repeat, even for the purpose of reprehending it. I would recommend to you for your own sake, and that of all in whom you have an interest, to acquire the virtue of subduing those violent resentments. Remember that 'the patient is better than the strong man; and he that ruleth his mind than the overthrower of cities.'"

"Well," said Dorgan, "you will not think the worse of me for speaking my mind freely, at all events."

"Ay, young man, there would be a merit in that frankness if it implied a purpose of amendment, as well as a consciousness of error. But it is the misfortune of your coun-

trymen and mine, to imagine that open-heartedness is a virtue, even when it only consists in making a boast of guilty propensities, which other men deem it prudent to conceal. I mentioned to you the merits of him against whom you have been railing, for the purpose of showing what a darkener of the mind and senses this private resentment is—and how it can so change the eyes and heart, as to make one man see evil, where all others can discern nought but good. It is the indulgence of this dreadful and selfish propensity, that has made the gibbets of our country groan under the burthen of so many hundreds of her young and high-spirited children. I warn you to beware of harbouring resentment against your brother." And saying this, the clergyman left the room, followed by Kinchela, who pleaded some business with the publican.

Dorgan remained for some time after in an attitude of stupid abstraction and amazement, not altogether occasioned so much by the reproof which he had undergone, as by the strange coincidence between the clergyman's last words and the warning given by the Card-drawer on that very morning. "What!" he exclaimed at length, striking the table forcibly with his clenched fist, and speaking with much vehemence; "are all the people mad, that they warn me at every step I take to beware of murder and the gallows? Do I meditate bloodshed? Let me take my own heart to task. Is it that of a midnight cut-throat? It surely is not. I have never spilled one red drop of living blood in my life, but that for which I ventured my own in the service of my country. I would not set my foot on that fly that is crawling there, if it were to purchase the three kingdoms. What then do the people mean? Is my forehead stamped like Cain's, with the mark of blood? Is murderer in my face? If Nature has written the word there, she lied foully, for the heart of the young lamb is not more free from the thought or thirst of violence than mine."

A little relieved by the fervour with which he thus un-

burthened his spirit, Dorgan prepared for his night's rest in the inn, and was shown by the landlord into a double bedded room, after bidding good night to Kinchela, who was to return to Loup Head early in the morning. Notwithstanding all the efforts which his companion made to banish from his memory the recollection of the double warning he had received in the course of the day, the circumstance still hung upon his mind, and troubled his slumbers. The forms of a methodical execution—the blanketed finisher of the law—the fatal cart—the tree—chains—night-cap—and all the other awful *et cetera* of a death untimely and ignominious, floated with a horrible and oppressive influence upon his brain; and he awoke just in time to save his neck from the noose which was all but fastened on it.

It was dark midnight; and he felt his head almost riven with a cruel ache, the result in all probability of his unaccustomed libations, together with the fatigue he had undergone the preceding day and night. Wishing to bind it round with a silk handkerchief, he stretched his hand out to the chair on which he had laid his clothes, but to his great surprise found that they had been removed. He rose and groped about the room for some time in the dark, but with no better success: he was, in fine, obliged to return to his bed and sleep off the illness as well as he could until morning.

Whatever his astonishment might have been at missing his clothes during the night, it certainly did not exceed that which he felt on opening his eyes next day and perceiving them exactly in the place where he had laid them the evening before. The royal father of Badroulboudour never rubbed his eyes so often or in such astonishment, at the disappearance of the enchanted palace of his son-in-law. Kinchela had already departed; and our hero, after discharging the duty of morning prayer with somewhat more than his usual fervency, and consuming a reasonable por-

tion of the publican's groceries, paid his bill like a man of honour, and departed.

The calmness of the morning, the fresh look of the green fields, the sweetness of the open air, and the sight of the hills and crags where the days of his childhood had passed so merrily—contributed to wean his mind from the gloomy reflections to which the occurrences of the preceding day had given rise. Every step that brought him nearer to the dwelling of his love, made his heart bound with a freer and happier movement within his bosom, until at length the exquisite poignancy of expectation became almost too eager and tumultuous for unmixed pleasure. He passed the old school-house in the glen, the chapel, the *inch* which was used for a play-ground, and at length, on arriving at the summit of a gentle eminence, beheld the farm-house (a neat little band-box, in which his love lay treasured like one of her own new bonnets) clustered in among a grove of Scotch firs, and presenting its cheerful white-washed front to the broad face of the Shannon, from which it was only separated by a green and sloping meadow.

It was rather early when Dorgan left the inn where he passed the night, so that he was a little surprised to see a considerable number of persons collected round the door. They passed rapidly in and out of the house, and a few hastened across the fields in the direction of the village, while others passed them after a hasty greeting, and seeming o convey the tidings of some important event. On a sudden, while Dorgan continued looking towards the open door, a woman rushed from it, hurried through the crowd, tore her cap from her head, and, while her long hair fell over her shoulders, began to clap her hands, and utter the most heart-piercing screams. A terrible sensation lodged itself upon the heart of young Dorgan as he heard this fatal song, which his memory enabled him to recognise as the death-wail of his country. He was about to spring from the low hedge on which he sat, and hasten to the house, when

he was stopped by a woman who had been sitting on the bank-side in the sunshine, arranging a small pack of rabbit-skins and goose-quills which she carried.

"Tee you! tee you!* sailor!" she exclaimed, "Tee you! Don't go a-near the house! Are you light?† They're on the watch for you. Oh! you foolish cratur, why didn't you do me bidden. I'd rather the cards to be out itself, this once, than to have such a clane, likely boy as what you are coom to any harm on the head of it."

"You infernal hag!" said Duke, turning fiercely upon her, "are *you* mad? Let go my dress! You are all mad together. What watch?—Who?—What do you mean?"

"You do well to be ignorant of it, to be sure, There was murder done in that house last night, and—"

"Hold!" said Dorgan, turning pale as death, and staggering forward, until he supported himself by grasping the extended arm of the Card-drawer. The woman paused and looked amazedly on him, while his head drooped upon his breast; a dreadful sickness laboured at his heart, and his brain felt as though it reeled within his head. At length, raising his eyes heavily to heaven, while his words fell from him with so faint an emphasis that the utterance of each single syllable seemed to require all the exertion his nerves could muster, he said slowly and feebly, "Great Heaven! if now, after my long absence from my native land, after all the danger through which the Almighty has preserved me, both by storm and battle,—if now, the first day of my coming home, the first day I was to meet my old friends, my first love, in health and happiness—if I am doomed to see her, after all our love, and our hopes, and our long parting, a bleeding corpse before me, I will strive to submit and bear the judgment; but do not blame me if my heart breaks under it—and if——Tell me," he continued pressing the Card-

* To you! Beware! † Mad.

drawer's arm, and panting with apprehension, while he dared not look in her face, "*Who* was murdered?"

"O thin, dear knows, sir, ould M'Loughlen was—an' I'd think that enough, an' not to go farther."

Again Dorgan paused, while his limbs shook with apprehension—"And—and—his daughter?"

"Oh, allilu! Penny, is it? Oh, indeed I wisht *himself* was as well as her, an' 'twould save her a sighth o' grief."

Dorgan covered his eyes with his hands, and leaned for some time, silent and motionless, with his back against the bank. At length, rising silently, with as much firmness as he could command, he began to move towards the house in silence.

"Don't you hear me, what I'm tellin' you, child?" said the Card-drawer.

"What do you say?—"

"They're all on the look-out for the murderers, and examinen 'em all right an' left—gentle and simple. Remember the knave o' clubs."

"Pooh—pooh!" Dorgan exclaimed, shaking his arm from her grasp, and hurrying toward the house.

"*Pooh*, is it?" said the indignant forestaller of the Destinies—"Shastone *pooh!* Gondoutha wisha *pooh!* That's my thanks. May be 'twould be a new story wit you before you'd leave that roof, then; an' I'd be sorry it should, for all. Well then, I declare, now," she added, crossing her hands in more composed soliloquy—"one oughtn't to be funnen on things o' that nature, at all—for see how what I did, be way of a punishment to frighten him, is coming very near the truth after all!—I declare, it's a droll thing to think of—Easy! isn't that the priest I see comen over the road? O murther alive! I'll be kilt if he sees me, after he warnen me out o' the parish last Advent." She huddled her pack hastily up, and ran along under cover of the hedge, in a different direction from that by which his reverence, the same gentleman under whose

censure Dorgan had lain at the inn the night before, was approaching the farm.

A dreary scene awaited our young hero in the interior of the house. He passed in without attracting any notice from the crowds of persons who were too busy, in hearing or telling the circumstances of the fearful occurrence which had taken place, to suffer their attention to be divided by the appearance of a stranger. In the centre of the neatly furnished kitchen was a long deal table, on which was laid the corpse, with the clothes in which he had been found—and all the awful appearances of a violent fate which he had undergone. The gray hairs, matted and stiff—and the wrinkled features distorted with the still surviving expression of horror, and frightfully dabbled in blood, remained still untouched, unchanged—an indication that the coroner's inquiry was not yet concluded. It was, in fact, at this moment, proceeding in an interior room. In the capacious chimney corner were seated a number of old women, who declared, as they socially passed the single pipe from one to another, that the old man would make a good corpse, when the blood was washed off and the hair combed sleek upon the brow. An old man, in another corner, was entertaining a number of wondering auditors, with an account of a murder far more horrible than the present, which had occurred within his own memory; and farther on, were seated a circle of females, preparing, by low modulations of the death-cry, to shine in the rivalry of the evening wail. Two or three of the sincere friends of the dead man, standing near his body, perused in heavy silence, and with grief-struck features, that face which even an enemy could not contemplate, disfigured and dragged as it was in the parting agony, without an emotion of pity and forgiveness—if not remorse. One of these men was Duke Dorgan.

He learned, from the conversation of those who stood around him, that a party had entered the house on the pre-

vious evening, in pursuance, as it was said, of a threat which had been conveyed to poor M'Loughlen a short time before, warning him not to bid for a certain farm in the neighbourhood, the former tenant of which had been ejected for non-payment of rent. M'Loughlen had disregarded this menace, and in some measure brought on himself the consequences which had been laid before him. His daughter, and a little girl, his niece, were the only persons in the house at the time; and the latter alone, an intelligent child about seven or eight years of age, was enabled to see the whole procedure, from a loft on which she usually slept. Dorgan entered the room where the coroner's inquest was held, just as that gentleman was beginning to take down the deposition of the infant witness.

"Well, my little darling," said the Coroner, "tell your story now, like a good girl. Don't be afraid of these gentlemen; we are all your friends, and we'll take care that nobody shall do you any harm."

"I will, ser," said the little girl. "This was the way of it. Uncle was sitten there abroad a-near the kitchen fire, on the sugan chair, an' Penny was readen a chapter out o' the Bible to him, an' Tom Dooly, our boy, was out looken at the bounds, to see would any o' the Key's cows be trespassen, an' meself was just out o' my first sleep above upon the loft, over right the fire-place, when I heard a tunderen rap coom to the back doore."

"Very well, my girl, very good child," the Coroner said, while he continued making his memoranda. "Well? you heard a knock?"

"I did, ser. Penny dropt the book in a fright, an' coom an' thrun her arms about uncle's neck. 'O murther, father! what's that, I wonder?' says Penny. 'It's the boys,* I fear,' says he, 'Heaven preserve my child!' says he. So he put Penny into the corner, an' then the party broke the door

* The familiar name for Insurgents.

(I heard it crashen), an' coom in an' began *croosten** uncle with stones, while he kep 'em off wit the chair. At last, they pull't the chair from him, an' bid him go on his knees to be shot. 'O boys,' says he, 'don't take my life, an' I'll give up the farm.' 'It's too late now,' says one of 'em—'why didn't you take the warnen whin it was given you?' With that he was going to strike him with a piece of a *sye*† he had in his hand, whin Penny ran screechen out o' the corner, an' tuk him by the coat to pull him away from uncle; but he threw her back again' the wall, an' then he began cutten uncle on the head with the *sye*, till he fell back on the floore groanen. 'You done enough now,' says one of the party that was with him, 'he never 'll see daylight agen—he hasn't a kick in him.' 'I owed that much to him a long while, then,' says the man as they were goen out the doore. Uncle was stretched a'most the first blow he gave him, *an' very justly*, for it was a great stroke surely."

Here the girl began to cry and tremble, as if labouring under great anxiety. "I'll be kilt now entirely," she said, "for there's one o' the men that murdered uncle liss'nen to me."

A general exclamation of astonishment and alarm broke from the circle at this naïve declaration. The doors were closed by the Coroner's desire, and the girl was asked to point out the person whom she recognised.

"I'd be afeerd he'd kill me," she said, weeping.

"Do not fear it," said the Coroner, taking her into his lap, and patting her head; "we are too strong and too many for him. Where is he, pet?"

"There he is, standen a-nigh the table, in the sailor's clothes."

She pointed to Dorgan, who felt, while her small finger was tremblingly directed towards him, as if he were sur-

* *Pelting* at him. † Scythe.

rounded by the phantoms of a hideous dream. He could scarcely believe that the fate with which he had been so singularly threatened was in reality to be fulfilled; and he could do nothing more than gape and stare around him, until the rough hands of two of the men present, grasping his collar, and dragging him before the Coroner's chair, convinced him that the scene and the event were directly the reverse of ideal.

"This is a serious charge that is brought against you, young man," said the Coroner. "What is your name?"

"Dorgan," was the reply. "I have served in his Majesty's navy, and have only arrived in Ireland the day before yesterday."

A murmuring of recognition passed among the people who crowded the room, and one of them whispered to the Coroner, who nodded as if in token of assent.

"You knew the deceased?" he said, again addressing Dorgan.

"I did, many years since."

"You owed him a spite, I believe?"

"I owe no man a *spite*. That is a coward's passion. He refused me the hand of his daughter, when I was very young, and I confess my resentment against him was strong; but I came home with an altered spirit, anxious to see and to be reconciled to him."

"Those were not, justice compels me to declare," said a voice behind Dorgan, "the sentiments which I heard you express towards him yesterday evening. In the parlour of the Bee-hive, I heard this very young sailor speak in terms of the vilest reproach against my poor murdered friend, M'Loughlen."

Dorgan looked over his shoulder, and beheld the clergyman with whom he had been speaking. "I cannot, nor am I anxious to deny that I did use such expressions," said he, a little confused, in spite of his consciousness of right, at the corroborative force which this unfortunate circumstance

was likely to give to the mistaken testimony of the child—"but I spoke then under unusual irritation. I had been indulging a little too freely in the strong liquor that was placed before me, and might have said, perhaps, more than I ought."

"Ay, and *done* more than you ought, sir, perhaps from the same cause. Doctor Mahony's evidence is important, however," the Coroner continued, writing.

"It would be," said Dorgan, with a sudden confidence brightening in his manner, "but that I have one witness who will decide the question of my innocence at once. There stands the landlord of the inn; he knows that I passed the night under his roof."

"I declare, gentleman sailor," said the landlord, affecting the euphony of the greater number of his class—"I'd prefer you didn't appale to my evijunce—I don't know who may be the perpetraathur of this horrid fact—but if I must give my judgment in the case, I must say that I *slep* in a room, the comrade o' that you hired, I heard you rise in the obscurity o' the night an' walk most surprising about the room, an' my wife testified to me that she had audience o' the doore outside openen an shutten a while before. It was a contraary thing for you to direct application to me, for I profess without mauing to be litigious or factious, I have nothen commendable to vouchsafe in your favour." And so saying, with the air of a Dogberry, the eloquent host retired from the gaze of the crowd into his former place, satisfied that he had impressed the company with the highest respect for the perspicuity and elegance of phraseology which he displayed.

There was no other witness to his *alibi*, who might not have been imposed upon by the same appearances, and Dorgan felt as if a net were weaving around him, from which he should in vain seek to disentangle himself.

"All these circumstances become more important as they corroborate each other," said the Coroner. "I am

afraid, young sir, that it will task your ingenuity hard to bear you safely through them all."

Dorgan paused for a moment, and pressed his hand on his brow in deep agitation. At last, starting from his reverie with a sudden and passionate vehemence—"Let Miss M'Loughlen be called," he exclaimed—"She saw the murderer, she is your first witness. Let her come quickly, or my life will be drivelled away by fools and children."

"You would do well, sir," said the Coroner, after requesting the clergyman to go for the unhappy girl, "to measure your language by the circumstances in which you are placed. The ground on which you stand does not appear to be the firmest possible."

"Peace, and be silent!" cried Dorgan, fiercely and loudly. "The ground on which I stand is the ground of my own innocence, and that I will maintain after my own fashion."

"I hope you will prove it tenable," said the Coroner.

"If it be undermined by others, in malice, or in wanton negligence," said our hero, "may the ruin fall on the heads of the contrivers!"

"Amen!" was the reply.

The throng at the door-way here separated, and Dorgan's attention was rivetted by an object of new and engrossing interest. The priest entered, supporting on his arm the slight and drooping figure of a young woman of an excelling beauty both of face and person, although the effect of the terrible shock which she had undergone, considerably abated the fresh and healthy bloom that was the legitimate property of the former. She was dressed in a plain dark cotton gown, with a blue silk ribbon tied simply round her well-formed head, while her light and polished curls shaded her pale features, and her deep blue eyes were fixed on the ground with a strong effort at the calmness of resignation, as the clergyman whispered some words of encouragement and comfort in her ear. A dead silence took place as soon

as she made her appearance, which continued until she had been conducted to a chair near the centre of the room.

Dorgan, after pausing for some time, in order to muster all his strength of mind, walked towards his love, and taking her hand, while she seemed scarcely conscious of the action, in his, said gently, "It is a sad meeting that has been reserved for us, Pennie; but do you not know me?"

The poor girl had not, from the time of the murder up to the present moment, indulged in any of those salutary bursts of grief, in which the loaded heart finds safety from breaking when it is oppressed with sorrow too mighty for its narrow limits to contain. The more violent, therefore, was the rush of passion, when a channel was at length afforded, by which the long pent-up and accumulating agony was enabled to discharge itself. When she recognised her lover, uttering a shrill and piercing shriek, which darted like an electric shock through the nerves of the hearers, she flung herself upon his neck, and hung in a convulsion of mingled tears and sobs around him. Dorgan supported and endeavoured to soothe her, while his own tears flowed in abundance, and the eyes of many of the company showed that their hearts were not proof against the suddenness of the appeal made to them.

"Oh, Dorgan, my own true friend, are you come indeed?" she exclaimed, gazing in his face, as if to be assured that she was not giving to a stranger the welcome that was *his* right—"Oh, Dorgan, I hoped that I should have the happiness to see you both friends once more—for he often and often spoke of you, and longed for your return, to tell you that his heart was changed;—but you have come to see a greater change than that. Cold enough his heart is now, Dorgan, towards you and all. He will not press your hand if you take it now. Oh, do not blame me, father," she exclaimed, as she caught the clergyman's eye fixed on her with an expression of reproof, "I am wrong

—I know I am—but my heart will break if I do not give it words."

"My own love, take comfort," said Dorgan, pressing her hand and speaking low to her—"You have lost a kind and good parent—but you are not yet an orphan, I will be a father, and friend, and brother to you, while I live. Try, and be composed like a sweet girl."

Few exhortations are attended with more influence than those which proceed from the lips of those we love. The interests of two hearts, united like those of our hero and his mistress, are so closely blended, so perfect and harmonious an understanding exists between them, that an admonition, addressed from one to the other, is received with as ready a deference as a suggestion of its own will. The effect, which all the remonstrances of her graver and more venerable friends failed to produce, was brought to pass in an instant by the few words which Dorgan addressed to her; and Pennie prepared herself to give evidence in some composure, while Dorgan, once more leaving her side, resumed his place near the table.

Pennie detailed the circumstances of the murder in nearly the same words as her little cousin, until she came to that part of the transaction at which she was said to have flung herself between her father and the assassin.

"You must have had an opportunity then," said the Coroner, "of observing him very closely. Will you have the goodness to look round the room, and see whether you can recognise him among those people?"

"I do not think I could know his face again," she said; "it was blackened at the time."

"How was he dressed?" inquired his Worship.

"I think in a sailor's dress—like Dorgan's," she said carelessly.

"You do not think it was *I* then?" said Dorgan, smiling.

"You?" replied the girl, pausing, as if to comprehend

his question, "I should sooner say that it was his own act —or as soon."

"If we have wronged you by an unworthy suspicion," said the Coroner to Dorgan, "you must blame the circumstances and not us—for they are more than sufficient to warrant us in looking well to the case. Are you quite certain, Miss M'Loughlen, that this was not the man whom you withheld from the deceased?"

"Certain that Dorgan did not murder my father! Am I certain of my existence? I would stake a thousand lives if I had them, that Dorgan would not have stirred one of the gray hairs upon his head, in enmity, if it were to make him master of the universe."

"My own sterling girl!" exclaimed Dorgan, delighted far more by her ready confidence, than by the safety which it procured him—"when all are turned against me, I have, at least, one friend in you—for you of all the world have ever known my heart."

"The coincidence is still very strange," said the Coroner. "Pray, Miss M'Loughlen, was there no mark—no peculiarity of appearances about this sailor, by which you might recognise him again if you should meet him?"

"My memory had nearly deserted me," replied the young woman. "When he flung me from him, I grasped something which was hanging to his coat, and brought it away with me in the struggle. It is this," she added, handing to the Coroner a piece of silver with a blue ribbon attached to it.

"This, indeed, is a most providential and important circumstance," said the latter, "and will do more to further the ends of justice, perhaps, than many living evidences."

The condemned wretch, who, after having his ears greeted with the gladdening tidings of a reprieve, is informed that the news was communicated under a mistake, and that he must still tread the road to the fatal tree, may imagine what Dorgan felt when on swiftly lifting his hand to the breast

of his coat, he found that his Trafalgar medal was missing —and that in fact the piece of silver which the Coroner held was no other than it. He paused for some time, in utter ignorance and anxiety as to what his best mode of procedure would be on the occasion. He saw, in one rapid glance, all the fearful consequences of asserting his claim to the medal, but he felt that anything like an attempt at concealment, would (even though it might afford him time to secure his life against the effects of an erroneous suspicion,) at least, have the consequence of branding his name with ignominy for ever in his native land, and Dorgan preferred his chance of hanging to that.

"I am sensible," said he to the Coroner in a low voice, "of all the injury which I may do myself by the avowal I am about to make—but I trust that all possibilities may be taken into account. How that medal can have come into Miss M'Loughlen's possession, I have not the remotest idea —but it is mine—the badge of distinction which all received who did their duty on the waves of Trafalgar."

"I really hope," said the Coroner, after the murmur of astonishment and strong interest occasioned by this admission had subsided—"I hope you are mistaken. This affords too frightful a confirmation of the circumstances already recorded against you."

"In that," replied Dorgan, "I am unfortunate, as many a brave fellow was before me. The medal is mine, however. I won it in honour, and will not disown it like a coward."

"I am sorry for you," said the Coroner. "Keeper!" he beckoned to the person who held that office in the neighbouring bridewell—"Hand-cuff your prisoner."

"Prisoner!" exclaimed Pennie, turning pale as death, rushing between Dorgan and the bridewell-keeper—"What prisoner? Why would you hand-cuff Dorgan, our best friend?"

"You would alter that opinion, Miss M'Loughlen," con-

tinued his worship, "if you knew that this young man was heard last night to utter the most violent language against your father—that he was heard to inquire respecting the number of people living in his house—that he was heard to leave his bed during the night, in the house where he slept, to which he returned before morning—and that now, to crown and to confirm all, he avows this medal, which you tore from the murderer's dress, to be his own."

"An' if he couldn't swear to it, *I* could," exclaimed the inn-keeper, "for I saw it wit my own eyes danglen at his breast as he was going to bed."

"It is all a dream, a wild, improbable, impossible story," exclaimed the girl with passion: "Deny it, Dorgan, and tell them they belie you."

"The circumstances which they have told you, my dear Pennie," said Dorgan, while she hung on his words as if to gather from their meaning the tidings of life or death, "are all true. I did make those inquiries,—I did speak in foolish anger against our murdered friend,—and that medal is indeed mine; but yet, Pennie—Pennie!" he reiterated as he felt the bewildered girl recoiling with an expression of vague and uncertain horror from his grasp, "I am innocent of this."

"It cannot be," said Pennie; "both cannot be. Say—oh, Dorgan, say once again that this is not your medal. My brain will burst if you do not say it."

"I love your happiness well, my poor girl," said Dorgan, looking on her with much greater pity than he felt for his own fate, "and I love my own life and character also; but I love truth better, and the truth I have told you all. Will you forsake me now, and leave me here all alone?" he added mournfully, as she struggled to free herself from him.

"Don't hold my hands, Dorgan! Drag—pluck me from him," she continued, beckoning rapidly to the clergyman, and speaking in low, thick, and terrified accents. "Great Heaven! what am I, poor creature, to think or say? Let go my hand!"

"I will not, till you say you fling me off! Look in my face, Pennie, and then call me your father's murderer if you can. I will not be told hereafter that you cursed my memory and reviled my name. I will hear you do so now before you stir! Am I your father's murderer?"

"Oh, Dorgan!" the girl exclaimed in a tone of cruel and piercing anguish, "what a question you ask? You! *you* his murderer! Was the hand that pressed mine so tenderly to-day, the same that sent the cold steel into his brain? Were those arms that supported me so often like a mother's, the same that flung me last night against the hard floor? It is impossible! I was praying, night and morning, for many years, for your safe return, and would the Almighty, the kind and merciful Father of all, send you home at last only to wet our floor with my old father's blood? His ways are awful and inscrutable, but it is not often that he tries his children so deeply. And still, Dorgan, there is the medal that the murderer wore, and you say 'tis yours, and you can do no more than say you are innocent. And sure it is enough from you. Don't blame me, Dorgan, if I wrong you! I love you but I would be viler than the dust under your feet, if I did not wish to see justice done to my dead father. What am I to think or do? My soul within me, that loves you, says that you are innocent, and my senses tell me that you are guilty; and the end will be, I think, that between both tales my heart will be broken at last."

She fell back, with a burst of wild grief, as she spoke these words, into the arms of a female friend, who, at the desire of the Coroner, hurried her, in a state of insensibility, through the crowd, and into the next apartment.

Dorgan continued to gaze after her with an expression of mingled admiration, pity, and agony blended in his look, until her form was completely concealed from him by the closing of the press after her.

"If you have any explanation to offer respecting those circumstances which seem to implicate you so strongly,

young man," said the Coroner, "we are willing to hear you now."

Dorgan started at the summons, as if all the indignant energy which he was capable of assuming, had been silently gathering within his breast during the last hour, and were now for the first time suddenly enkindled at a moment. "Have I *any* thing to say?" he exclaimed; "if your souls were not blinded, would not the case itself make it unnecessary for me to degrade myself even to a denial of such a charge. I ask you, gentlemen!" he continued, standing erect and flinging his arms wide as he looked round upon the company with that glowing eloquence of eye, and cheek, and action, which the great instructress Nature can in an instant infuse on an occasion of great excitement and emergency into the constitutions of those to whom the science itself has ever remained a mystery; "I ask you is it likely that on the first night of my arrival in my native land, after a long and profitable absence, with every thing that was wanted to secure me happiness and honour for the remainder of my life, and with the love of such a creature as that to reward me for all my sufferings and slights, and with the knowledge too that her father repented of his hard conduct towards me, and longed to call me his friend again—I ask you, is it likely that I would so causelessly dip my hands in the blood of that old man, to blast all my own hopes and prospects for ever? Is it possible? I am a British sailor—is that the character of ruffian or a traitor? That medal which you hold was given to me as a reward for discharging my duty well and faithfully—is it likely I would stain it with the blood of a secret murder? I trod the decks of the Victory for seven years, a deck that was never pressed by the foot of a coward. I laid my hands on the white hairs of my commander Nelson, when he lay bleeding on the bed of glory—is it likely I should hack and hew the hoary head of a defenceless fellow-creature? I stood by his side at Trafalgar and

never shrunk in the daylight from an enemy's broadside—is it likely that I would stab an old man in the dark?"

The indignant fire and conscious energy of manner with which Dorgan spoke his defence, produced for some moments a pause of respectful silence, if not of admiration; and he was suffered for some time to retain undisputed possession of the superiority to which he had thus swiftly lifted himself above the minds of his common auditors.

"If words could outweigh facts," the Coroner at length said, "it would, I believe, become our duty to liberate you at once, but these yet remain unchanged by any thing you have advanced."

"What can you do but reason on them?" said Dorgan. "If you cannot understand the arguments of honour, listen to those of prudence. Do you think it probable that the murderer of M'Loughlen would come as I have done to brave investigation so openly? Do you think he would have avowed that medal, which he might have disowned, at least until he could have placed his life beyond the power of the laws?"

"I know not," said the Coroner, "by what illusions he might be cheated, or how far he might be tempted to trust his own ingenuity. It might be that the Almighty often, for justice' sake, bereaves the minds of guilty men of that common sagacity with which he has gifted most of his creatures for their preservation, and betrayed them into measures of fool-hardy confidence, in which a child might better them. Such instances are of frequent occurrence, and if yours be one of them, all which you have been urging tends only to show that you have dreadfully misappropriated qualities which, properly directed, would have served your country and your fellow-creatures."

"They were never spared in the service of either," said Dorgan, "and little did I think that this should be my reward."

He was then removed, while the Coroner and the Jury performed their several offices—the former of stating the

case—and the latter of considering it. In less than a quarter of an hour after, Dorgan was again called.

"It will be necessary for you," said the Coroner, "to use every exertion in your power to prove your innocence (if you still persist in asserting it), and to collect all the evidence that is possible, for you are implicated in the verdict of the jury. It is, wilful murder against Duke Dorgan, and some persons unknown."

A deep silence ensued, during which all eyes were bent on the unfortunate sailor. At the first announcement of the verdict he turned deadly pale, his eye became watery, the lid trembled, and a momentary shivering seemed to pass through all his frame. But the instant after, he had resumed his self-command, and drawing himself up to his full height, replied calmly,

"I have been considering this occurrence more deeply since I withdrew, and am sorry now for the language which I was tempted, in the first anger of my heart, to use; not that it offended the truth, but that it argued a very stubborn will towards the ordinance of heaven. I should have recollected that you are not to blame for error in this. If it were not His will, and did not further some wise and useful, though hidden design of His, you could not lay a violent finger upon a hair of my head. My innocence is not the less white in His eyes for being wrongfully attainted in those of men. I have a strong confidence in His mercy, that the real murderer will yet be discovered, and that I shall never die for this deed:—but if that confidence should fail me, I have at least the satisfaction of knowing that we shall all, in the end, be judged together before a bar where no injustice can be committed. Under all the circumstances, gentlemen, I blame you not for the verdict you have given. I acknowledge the strength of appearances, and it is therefore not in censure of you, I say—May all who hear me, obtain a fairer hearing at that bar, than I have met with at yours!"

The house was soon after cleared of all but the unhappy family of the deceased and their friends. Many of the spectators, as they took their way over the fields, were heard to express their regret at such a misfortune happening to "such a bright boy" as our hero, while others shook their heads and declared (on the authority in many instances of severe personal experience) that "Duke had ever an' always too good a warrant for a hard blow," and that the destiny which seemed now to hang over his head, was no other than had been often prophesied for him, "many a long year before."

Poor Duke in the meantime was conducted, heavily ironed, to the neighbouring bridewell, as a place of temporary confinement, until an opportunity should arrive of transmitting him to the county gaol. Here, when the key (the rusty grating of which in the lock spoke pretty well for the morality of the district) had locked him in to the company of his own lonely thoughts, he could not help exclaiming, as he extended his manacled hands, in the language which Southerne has put into the mouth of the unhappy Biron, and which we have prefixed as an appropriate motto to his history: "Is this my welcome home?"

The friends of the deceased, in the meantime, were busied in administering the consolations which their humble, though sincere understandings suggested, to his wretched daughter. She was seated on the side of the dimity-curtained camp bed in her own apartment, while the clergyman, whose influence alone appeared capable of restraining her, still occupied a chair at her side; and several of her male and female friends were placed in different parts of the room, offering now and then those venerable and hereditary expressions of consolation which are usually put forward on such occasions, and which at least have one merit, that of their perfect and unquestionable veracity—such as, "that Pennie might as well howl her whisht,* for if she was to

* Hold her peace.

cry her eyes out, 'twouldn't make him alive again," and various other undeniable facts of that nature, while the clergyman with a truer insight into human nature, directed her attention to that beautiful passage of Ecclesiasticus in which we are told to "weep but a little for the dead, for he is at rest!"

"It is not all for the dead, father—heaven forgive me! —that I grieve," said the poor girl "The Almighty made a short work with my father—but his mercy is swifter than the murderer's knife—and I trust in that, hoping that he is one of those who are at rest. But I have still a trouble in my heart for the living. I wish, if it was heaven's will, that I were waked beside my father, before I had lived to hear any one doubt Dorgan for so revengeful a heart. You, you, Kinchela!" she continued, as Pryce entered the room, with a face of deep sorrow and commiseration—"you were not so hard! On my knees, here, I ask your pardon (don't hinder me, father!) for all that I ever said or did against you for your over-great mildness. You pardoned the old man, and made him no answer to his anger. *You* would not shed his blood in return for a hot word. The Lord that sees into the secrets of all men, will remember it for you another day!"

"Stand up!" Kinchela exclaimed, turning pale with agitation, while he lifted her hastily from the earth, and then hurried from her side: "Why should you be kneelen' to me, Pennie, darlen; I don't deserve them words."

"You wrong yourself," said the clergyman, who remembered Kinchela's remonstrance to Dorgan, which he had accidentally overheard on the previous evening; "I heard you utter sentiments yesterday, which would have done honour to many a cultivated mind. It would be well for the young man that is now lying in chains for this murder, if he had profited by your example and advice. But," he continued, heedless of the real distress which his praise (the

result of a very natural feeling of admiration) appeared to occasion to the object of it—"let not this move you to pride, for from it all perdition had its beginning. If you stand now, take heed lest you fall. You, perhaps, were among those who witnessed Dorgan's confidence, before the fatal train of circumstances was made out against him. Let that example place you on your guard; remember when you may be tempted to an offence, that there is no hiding-place on earth for the guilty, when the Almighty chooses to mark them out with his finger! and that, as sure as the rising of the sun that hides him at night in the west, so sure is the uncloaking of the deeds of the evil-worker, though he enclose himself within four walls, and asks 'what eye can see him?' while he sins under the veil of a denser than Egyptian darkness."

The words of the clergyman appeared to exercise a strong influence on the mind of the person whom he addressed; so much so, that his colour went and came several times while he listened. When the reverend gentleman had concluded, Kinchela took a hasty farewell of the company, on the plea of being obliged to prepare for a seal-hunt in the caverns near the Head, on the following morning. He left the inmates of the dwelling to make the necessary arrangements for the wake of the old man, while he hastened under the already advancing shades of night, to his own humble dwelling near the coast.

He hurried over the interjacent hills, with a speed which was in part occasioned by his anxiety to reach the coast in time to make the necessary arrangements for the seal-hunt, and, in a great measure also, by his fear of encountering a straggler from a host of evil spirits, whose hour of dominion on the earth was fast approaching. He raised with an unsteady hand the latch of the *hurdle* door of his cabin, and was received by the only member of his family whom he had ever known, and whom he really loved with an affection greater and more permanent than any which he had

ever felt towards a human being—his aged and infirm mother.

There are, perhaps, none of the social connexions of human life more touching, more interesting, and more perfectly free from the alloy of selfish motive, than those which bind the hearts of mother and son, or of father and daughter. The purer qualities that mingle in all other affections—the respect of youth for age—and the tenderness of age for youth—the protecting and depending love that binds the sexes—the warmth and softness of conjugal affection, without any of its changes or suspicions—the finer essences, in short of all the various impulses by which the spirit of human beings are led to mingle and flow together in a league of mutual confidence and support, are here sublimed and united in their fullest strength and purity. Neither are such instances of generous love less interesting, when they are found to exist in classes where there is little of external refinement to grace and adorn them. The gold of Nature is of the same sterling quality in its bed of rough ore, as when it glitters on the breast of beauty or of royalty—it is only the figure that is altered. If the frame-work of the human character were not composed of the same materials through all classes, what hope could we have that the rich, the elegant, and the high-born would honour with their sympathy the pictures of humble sorrow and affection, which these Tales are intended to present? Less—even less, than we venture to entertain while we are employed in sketching them.

The affection of Kinchela for his aged mother was one of the features in his character which had procured him a considerable portion of regard in the neighbourhood; such filial affection being looked on with a peculiar esteem in Ireland —a country where (to use a familiar expression of its own peasantry) "a man's child is always his child," for the interests of a family are seldom divided, even by marriage. The old widow was pious and honest; and though Pryce

did not possess either of those qualities in any brilliant degree himself, he respected them in his parent, and was careful to preserve from her knowledge any part of his conduct by which they might be offended. Without feeling in his own heart any extraordinary respect for the precepts of his Church, he was frequently known to smuggle a keg of tobacco or Hollands, in order to enable his mother to pay her Christmas or Easter dues; and would have stolen a sheep for the suet, rather than she should suffer any conscientious qualms about the want of the usual present of candles for the altar, never daring to supply her with either, until he taxed his ingenuity to furnish a perfectly satisfactory story, which would set all her doubts or scruples at rest.

The good woman was now seated by their fire of turf and pieces of wreck, engaged in keeping warm the simple fare which was intended for her son's dinner. A small deal table was placed near the hearth, and close to it a rush-bottomed chair ready set for his use. Over a few red coals which were broken small, the iron tongs, placed lengthwise, and opened a little, was made to perform the part of a gridiron towards a beautiful Beltard turbot, which a gourmand would have judged worthy of a prouder table, and a more elaborate process of cookery.

"A hundred thousand welcomes, child of my heart," said the old woman, speaking in her native language; "I thought the very darkness would not bring you home to me. Sit down."

Kinchela took his seat at the table in silence, while his mother placed before him the food which she had prepared. She perceived, however, that he did not eat with his usual despatch and satisfaction.

"There is some secret hanging on your mind, my fair heart," said she, "you do not eat. You did not sleep at home these two nights; and when you came in this morning, you looked paler than paper, and trembled like a straw upon the water."

"I didn't sleep abroad either," replied Kinchela, "an' sure what else would I be only pale after that, an' I being getten the canoes ready all night, let alone what I heerd this mornen, moreover."

"What was that, darling?"

"Old M'Loughlen to be murthered last night in his own house, over."

The old woman uttered an exclamation of horror—"Woe and sorrow!" she exclaimed: "when will they be weary of drawing the blood of the gray-headed? Your own father, Pryce, died by the cold steel. It is true for the priest what he said from the altar last Sunday, that Ireland was more cursed by the passions of her own children than ever she was by Dane or Sassenagh. The judgment of the Jews will fall on us at last. We are hunted through our country and from our country in punishment of our sins."

"They say Dorgan—Duke Dorgan, that lived near the sally-coop, eastwards, did the deed. I saw 'em taken of him to bridewell, on the head of it."

"There! there, Pryce!" said his mother. "Remember my words when you were refused by him, and when you swore to me that you would never forgive him the longest day you'd live."

"I did not swear it!" said Kinchela, starting, as if in alarm.

"You did—and sorry enough you were for it afterward. You might have been in Dorgan's place, if it were not for the mercy of Heaven."

"Let us have no more talk about it now, whatever," said Pryce; "I'll want to take a little rest before goen to the sale-hunt; an' I must have the canoe near the caverns before daybreak. Do you get the wattles an' the charcoal ready, mother, an' lay 'em there, a nigh the settle-bed, agen I get up."

Pryce retired to his bed-room, but seemed to be haunted

even in the darkness and solitude of this retreat by a certain uneasy train of feeling which appeared to have been clinging to him throughout the day. He had truly stated to his mother that he passed the former night without sleep; but this circumstance, instead of making him sink the more easily into slumber, had only the effect of weakening his nerves, and filling his brain with all the frantic images of sleep, without any of its calmness or comfort. His mother, disturbed by the restless moans which proceeded from his chamber, laid down the bag of charcoal which she was preparing, and taking a rush-light, made fast in the fissure of a twig, in her hand, entered the room. Her son was at that moment labouring under a hideous dream. His head hung down over the bed-side, his arms were extended, his forehead and hair damp with sweat. He saw, in fancy, the corpse of the old man as it lay stretched on the table at M'Loughlen's, and seemed to be oppressed with the conviction that some person had seized and was taxing him with the deed.

"Let go my throat!" he muttered hoarsely. "It was not I—'Twas Dorgan—Dorgan did it, and not I!—He lies—the old man never named me—he could not—for my face was blackened. Let go my throat!"

"The Almighty protect and bless my son!" said the woman, as she stirred him, and made him spring up terrified in his bed, "what words are these?"

Kinchela remained for some time sitting erect, his eyes wild and staring, and his mouth agape with terror. Consciousness at length stole upon him, and covering his face with his hands, he leaned forward for some moments in silence.

"What was the matter, child?" the old woman at length asked, as she laid her hand affectionately on his shoulder.

"Nothen!—nothen—only dreamen greatly I was—Aren't you gone to bed yet, mother?"

"No, darling; 'tisn't far in the night. Those were dreadful words you spoke, Pryce?"

"Did I talk out o' my sleep?"

"You did; you spoke as if somebody was charging you with a great crime, and you denied it, and bid them to let go your throat."

Pryce paused a moment. Well, mother," said he at length, "I didn't think it would be so aisy to take a start out o' you. Sure 'twas funnen I was all that while."

"There was little mirth then in your voice or in your actions," replied his mother, still speaking (as she always used) in her vernacular tongue, "I thought the hag of the night had been throttling you."

"I tell you 'twas a joke, agen. Sure I *felt* you comen into the room. I was as broad awake as you are now. Go to bed, mother, an' hear to me! Don't say anythen o' this in the mornen, for 'twouldn't look well to be joken on such a business."

The aged widow left the room and retired to her own settle-bed, after offering up her usual portion of nightly invocations to the throne of mercy for all blessings upon all men; while her son remained wrapped in a mood of intense reflection, sitting on his bed-side, and using every exertion in his power to compose his troubled spirit.

"For years an' years," said he, "I was looken to that hour, an' I thought it would be worth all I ever suffered or ever could suffer to live to see it; an' now it has come, an' is this the happiness it was to bring me? The pains of hunger and thirst, the cold of the winter night, the shame and disgrace that I endured, wor no more than child's play to the sight of him as he lay gaspen and groanen on the ground before me. Murder is a fearful thing for all!"

Suddenly, while he paused and remained fixed in horror at the bed-side, a sensation of strong fear—one of those powerful nervous affections by which persons of deep though silent passions, and ill-regulated minds, are liable to be as-

sailed on any startling occasion—rushed to his heart and caused the blood to recoil upon it in such quantity, as to obstruct its action, and endanger, to his own thought, the very structure of the organ. Its pulses ceased for a moment and then resumed their play, with a violence which filled him with terror. He heard distinctly every bound which the irritated muscle made within his bosom, and a swift and unaccountable suspicion darted through his mind, that this was but the signal of a dissolution of the entire frame; that the hour of death which no accident of illness or of peril had ever brought before him, was now arrived; and that he was presently to undergo that awful and mysterious change, at the prospect of which, even the impenetrable heart of the sophist becomes illumined by a horrid light, and the souls of the saints themselves are not always free from anxiety; that change at the presence of which the light laugh or jest of petty malice, which was deemed so venial in the discourse of the preceding day, seems to swell and darken into a crime sufficiently enormous to blot out the light of paradise from our eyes for ever. The wretched man believed that he was now about to be hurried, fresh from the very act of his offending, before the judgment-seat, the terrors of which he had often heard depicted, but which had never affected his mind with any other sensation than that of weariness and impatience, until now that he almost beheld it within the scope of his own vision. He lay back in an agony of horror on his bed—the world and his worldly interests and connexions seemed to crumble into dust before his eyes—he was sensible of nothing but the eternal ruin that hung over him. He clasped his hands, while a thick perspiration spread over all his frame, and prayed loudly for mercy, promising in his anguish that if he were granted but a little time, all should be disclosed, and justice fulfilled at any cost. While he continued praying, the beating of his heart subsided, a gradual relief crept over his spirits, which were at length lulled fast in a sound and dreamless slumber.

The first gray light of the winter daybreak was streaming through the single pane of glass which was set in the mud wall of his apartment, when the voice of an acquaintance roused him from his short sleep. For a few moments after he woke, he felt as if nothing had taken place out of the usual course of events, and proceeded to make the necessary preparations for the seal-hunt.

"We've everything ready," said the man, "the canoes are at the Poul a Dhiol,* an' we're goen to have some fun besides with Lewy Madigan, the publican o' the Bee-hive, that's comen wit uz—an'—whisht! Is there any body there wit you?"

"No."

"Bekays I met Dorgan now an' a strong party, goen to Ennis, where the assizes are held this week. They say he won't call any witness, an' wants to be tried as soon as they can."

Pryce dropped the net which he had taken up, and remained silent for a moment. The consciousness of his situation came rushing at once upon his mind, and he remembered with terror the vow of disclosure which he had made in the night. He now stood, however, in very different circumstances; the cheerful daylight was about him, he felt secure in the possession of excellent health, and he half resolved in his own mind to postpone the fulfilment of his promise for some time yet.

Before he left the house, he took a small iron pot filled with potatoes, washed and ready for boiling, which he proceeded to hang on the fire. "Yes—that's what I'll do," he said within himself—"what fear is there o' me now? Sure it's time enough to think about it yet."

A singular accident made him alter this opinion. At the moment that he spoke, a large stone, unfixed by the hand of Time from its position in the roof of the wide chimney,

* The Demon's Hole, near Loup Head.

fell within an inch of his forehead, and dashed the vessel to pieces between his hands. If it had only held its place one second longer, his brains would have infallibly suffered the same fate. He started aghast with the conviction of a present and powerful Providence. What security had he now?—what was the use of the ingenious scheme which he had contrived to preserve his life and escape all suspicion, when it was no more within his own power than if he were already at the tree?

As they proceeded together toward that part of the cliff at which their canoes (a light boat, as ancient as the days of Oilam Fodhla, constructed of horse skin, which is used by the fishermen on those coasts) were moored, Kinchela ventured to hint a sensation of his remorse to the rough fellow who accompanied him. The latter happened to be one of those cold ruffians, whose crimes are the offspring of interest and not of passion, and who was alike incapable of wanton cruelty or of merciful forbearance. The suggestion filled him with rage.

"That I may be happy, Kinchela," said he, "but you're just what I always took you for. You wor the cruellest savage among us at the time—an' now I'll lay my life you'll be the fusht to split."

"Well, howl your tongue, Fed, an' we'll say nothen more about it. Only I wisht I could avoid the double murd'r, any way."

"What, murther is it, man? E' what nonsins you talk! Sure you know yourself, if Dorgan was there he'd do the very same—an' 'twas only to get the start of him you did."

Kinchela did not pursue the subject farther, although the reasoning of his companion did not fully satisfy his mind that Dorgan deserved hanging for being liable to temptation. They had at this moment reached the brink of a long line of rocky cliffs of considerable height, the bases of which were in many places hollowed out to a con-

siderable distance inland. They continued their course over a turf mountain on which the signal tower was placed in a most commanding situation. Its surface was covered with a short scanty moss, that afforded pasturage to a number of sheep; while, at another season, it might have furnished the whole country with mushrooms. The broken jags and edges of the great cliffs at the head soon began to make themselves visible. The first on which they arrived presented a broken descent some hundred feet high, at the base of which lay a sloping ledge of rock, against whose jutting and uneven sides the bright green waves of the Atlantic lashed themselves (on more boisterous mornings than the present,) as if chafing at the stern and fixed rebuke which this gigantic natural boundary opposes to their fury; sometimes rushing fiercely up its sides, and leaving their white and foaming waters in the narrow crevices of crag, from which they are seen descending again in a thousand milky streams. They tried to descend here, but found it dangerous; that part of the recess which, seen from a little distance, appeared to be sufficiently broken and slanting, proving, when they came near it, much more closely allied to the perpendicular. A little farther toward the Head, however, they chanced upon the Poul a Dhiol, or Devil's Hole.

It was a recess of gigantic size, formed in the solid cliff by the beating of the waves, if not originally so moulded, or left as a relic of chaotic matter, unsubdued to the form and uses to which the great mass of the material, of which this beautiful globe of earth and water is compounded, has been reduced. This recess ran at first into the land, and then some hundred yards to the left, as it was viewed from the water.

Perceiving an easy mode of descent, Kinchela and his friends made good their entry into the infernal palace, and were stopped about half way down by an enormous rock, which lay across the glen, and seemed to allow no hope of

proceeding farther. Acquainted, however, with the facilities of the descent, they entered a small aperture left underneath. The spectacle which the Poul a Dhiol presented when viewed from beneath this arch-way was grand and striking, as well as singular in the highest degree. Through the opening, as they looked upward, they could see the cliff heads piled together to the height of some hundred feet, leaving between the uneven masses of rock the wild and craggy space through which they had descended. Below them, at a depth of many fathoms, the ocean waves heaved sluggishly against the huge rocks, which were almost polished and rounded by the untiring dash of the waters. Passing from beneath the rock, the fishermen suffered themselves to drop with little difficulty to the next ledge, and running from one enormous crag to another down to the water's edge, began to make the necessary preparations for their morning's sport, without stopping to indulge in any of the sensations of deep and trembling awe, with which the magnificence and grandeur of the scene, into the centre of which they had intruded, must have impressed the mind of a stranger. They stood in the midst of a vast natural hall, a few yards in width, and walled in on either side to the height of many hundred feet; the solid cliff on the landward side appearing directly to overhang their heads. Opposite, in a dark recess of the cliff, and placed on a ledge of rock at some height from the wafer, was a large crag, approaching in form to a lobster's claw, based on the obtuse end, which, from the singularity of its appearance, contributed much to the *bizzare* and fantastic grandeur of the scene. Looking toward the opening of the recess, they beheld the projections of three stupendous and overhanging cliffs, within the compass of a quarter of a mile; the farthest off being the land's end or actual Head, on which the light-house was still flinging its fading beams against the morning splendour. Close to the opening was a lofty island, perpendicular at all sides, and circular in

shape, of dimensions so circumscribed, that it seemed to rise from the waters at the entrance like the remaining column of a porch. Its heathy and tabular summit was covered with sea-gulls, which kept wheeling and screaming perpetually among the crags and precipices. Close to the Head was a large insular crag, which rose even higher than the lofty cliff, from which it seemed at one time or another to have been separated, and formed a noble termination to this magnificent *coup d'œil*. The prevailing impression which the scene, contemplated from the place where the fishermen stood, was calculated to leave on an unaccustomed mind, was that of fear, and an anxious and almost tumultuous excitation of the spirits. There was an oppressive sense of confinement and insecurity, which repressed the struggling admiration that a spectacle of even inferior power or sublimity might have awakened.

Several canoes were already made fast near the rocks, and a number of fishermen were seen in various clefts of the sullen crag, preparing their poles or wattles with bags of charcoal affixed to them, touching the use of which they furnish a rather whimsical account of the animal's nature. They say that the seal is very certain to lay hold of the person who first approaches him, and to retain his hold, until he hears the bone crack under his teeth. In order to deceive him in this matter, the fishermen extend a long pole with a bag of charcoal attached, which bag he crunches with a remarkably good will, while his enemies muster around and destroy him with staves. For the truth of this story we will not vouch, as it certainly is not very complimentary to the sagacity of the animal.

The groups of moving figures in the crags—the tossing of the light canoes beneath—the dreary waste of the now peaceful ocean spreading in the distance—and the uncertain morning light which at once shadowed and illumined the whole picture in the manner best adapted to aid the grandeur of effect which it was calculated to produce,

might possibly have arrested, for a considerable time, the attention of persons more capable of appreciating its sublimity than Kinchela and his friend, who were too familiar with its beauties, and too deficient in refinement of taste to pause for a moment in their contemplation.

After they had descended, they were met by a man, who appeared to have been expecting their arrival.

"I declare, gentlemen," said he, accosting them in the manner of a condescending superior—"I have been prefixed upon this rock the livelong morn, expecting your descension. That's a commendable canoe you have, Fed."

"Oyeh, wisha, middlen."

"Dear knows, it is. They say the sales are congregated in a very spontaneous manner under the cliffs, at Ballybunnion this mornen."

"O enough, for sport, I'll be bound, Mr. Madigan," said Fed, who recognised at first sight, in the speaker, the accomplished inn-keeper of the Bee-hive, a man revered in the neighbourhood for his knowledge of English, and laughed at now and then for his cowardice. "You'll go with us, I suppose, sir?"

"I profess to you, my dear, I am onaisy in myself on the prospect of it. I should not admire much to be substituted onder one o' them caverns, when the tide would be on the alert with me."

"O, no fear in life, sir. The wathur is like glass to-day. Come along, Kinchela. We'll just take one turn at the sales, an' then we'll go westwards a piece, an' get a feow bags o' the barnocks."

They put off, and the whole party were presently gliding under the cliffs at the Head, on their way to the caverns, each canoe being furnished with a lighted torch, to enable them, with greater facility, to explore the mazes of the gloomy subterrene, into which they were about to penetrate. As the first boats entered, it seemed to those who were following at some distance, and not yet near enough

to distinguish the mouth of the cavern, as if their companions had discovered, and were prosecuting the way to the regions of those subaqueous sprites, who are supposed by the peasantry to people the vast palaces of the deep, and wear out their immortality in a fairy land more gorgeous than that to which the muse of Southey introduced the protector of his heroine. In a short time our acquaintances found themselves in the centre of one of those lofty natural halls; the roof, irregularly arched above, sometimes at the height of three, sometimes twenty feet, and glittering indistinctly in the light of the numerous torches which were also reflected from the face of the broken waters, with a splendour which presented a brilliant contrast to the dense gloom of the interior of the cavern, and which, of course, would have reminded the reader of Rembrandt.

"It is a speculation of uncommon perplexity," said Mr. Madigan, "those exuberant rocks overhead; I protest to you, I think they appear on the verge of suspense, as if they'd exterminate us all into a watery grave."

The canoes proceeded farther up the cave, until the dashing of waters, within a few yards of them, intimated their proximity to the ledges of rock on which the objects of their search were accustomed to secrete themselves at particular seasons, and where they frequently suffer their pursuers to approach them, without making any attempt at escape or resistance until violence had been actually offered. While they pursued their game in the interior, Madigan petitioned to be left on one of the outer ledges, unwilling to trust his English into the perils of the hunt; while Kinchela and his companion, perceiving that they might be spared from the party, left the cavern for the purpose of gathering barnocks (a shell fish which is here found of a prodigious size,) from the sides of a neighbouring cliff.

The cliff which they selected for this purpose was the Bellaun Rock; which presents, from the plainness and smoothness of its perpendicular side, a striking contrast to

the rough and broken barrier, which opposes its irregular strength to the ocean on either side. It is one of the loftiest in the range, and as it affords no path or means of descent in any part, the fishermen are obliged to lower themselves by ropes to its centre, or to any portion of it on which the harvest of barnocks happens to be most plentiful. Kinchela and his friends made profit of the retiring tide, however, from their canoes, and then proceeded by land to Claunsevane, or the Natural Bridge, a piece of scenery with which we will conclude our rather copious sketch of the coast, and the omission of which would leave that sketch very incomplete.

They passed along a precipitous range of cliffs, until they were made aware of the proximity of the place by the thundering of the waters on their left, although the day was calm rather than otherwise. They passed the Puffing Hole of Ross (one of those natural *jets d'eau*, which abound on the coast, and which are formed by a narrow opening, inland, over one of the caverns, into which the ocean waves rush with such fury as to force their way through the neck, and ascend to a prodigious height in the air above). In a short time they found themselves on the borders of the precipitous inlet of Claunsevane. It was a small bay with a narrow opening toward the Atlantic, and walled round at all sides by a rugged crag which rose to a prodigious height. Across an arm of this inlet was a narrow range of crag, connecting the cliffs at either side, having the bay on one side, and on the other a deep basin, into which the waters flowed through three natural arches formed in the solid crag. A very narrow pathway was made on the summit of this singular natural bridge, several hundred feet above the arches, the fall at either side, but especially that toward the ocean, being almost quite perpendicular. In the base of the cliff inside the basin were a number of small caves; and in another corner of the inlet a tall column of rock, not more than a yard, perhaps, in

diameter, rose from the waves nearly to the height of the cliff, at a little distance from which it stood. This pillar, which is called the Stick, gives an air of uncommon wildness to the scene.

Kinchela having, with the assistance of his friend, succeeded in securing near the edge of the cliff a kind of rude windlass, for the purpose of enabling them to increase their store of barnocks, made fast their rope in the earth, and prepared to descend.

This was a feat which he had been accustomed to perform, almost daily, from his boyhood, and he never had, for one moment, felt a greater degree of repugnance or apprehension than he would have experienced in walking on the firm soil. But he was now an altered man, and he felt, as he put his foot in the loop which was made in the end of the rope, and grasping it with both hands, launched himself from the brow of the "pernicious height," a sensation of insecurity, and a sinking of the heart, such as he never before had felt in any situation whatever. He even wished that he had taken the precaution (though it would have had but a cowardly air) to secure himself to the rope by tying it to his waist; but it was now too late for reflection, and he had only to trust his customary chances for a safe return to the firm earth.

While he was occupied in filling his net with the barnocks which he struck from the rock, he suddenly heard a crackling noise above his head, and looking up, saw that one of the divisions or strands of the rope had given way, leaving the whole weight of his person on the faith of a single cord, not more than half an inch in diameter. He was now suspended in mid-air, more than a hundred feet from the summit, and saw, at a fearful distance beneath, the points of the rugged crag, around which the waters were now slumbering in almost a moveless calm. He feared to stir—to speak—to give any indication of his danger, lest it should only have the effect of making the latter

more imminent. His limbs trembled, and became bathed in perspiration, while he cast his eyes on that part of the rope where the fissure had taken place. He could almost, and only almost, reach it with his hand. Again all the horrors of the preceding night and morning were renewed, and a stupifying terror seized upon his brain. He ventured, at length, to give the signal, at which his companion was to draw him to the summit. While he was doing so, and while he yet hung suspended between the dreadful alternative of life or death, some of the canoes passed under him on their way from the caverns to their homes, and the fishermen, in their own aboriginal language, began to hoot and jibe him as they passed, making various allusions to his position in the air, and drawing analogies concerning the rope, the humour of which poor Kinchela was in no condition to appreciate. A cold shivering passed through his limbs, when he saw the feeble portion of it approach the rugged edge of the cliff; and here, as if for the purpose of increasing his agony, Fed stopped turning the windlass, and approached the brink with marks of alarm and astonishment.

"E', Pryce, man," said he, "do you see the danger you're in all this while? Sure there's the rope med a'most two halves of, above you. Sure if that broke you'd be ruined, man."

"Wisha, then, Fed, what news you tell! Is that the reason you stop haulen of it, in dread I'd have any chance at all. Murther alive, see this."

"I'll pull you up if you like, man, but what harm was there in me tellen you your danger?"

"All o' one 'tisn't too well I knew it. Pull away, an' *sonuher* to you."

Fed resumed his post at the windlass, and in a few moments after, Kinchela grasped the edge of the cliff; he succeeded in scrambling up, after which, without speaking a word to his companion, he flung down the net of bar-

nocks, and fled, as if he were hunted by the fiends, in the direction of his mother's house; while his companion, after gazing after him and at the barnocks for a few moments, packed up their implements, and took to his heels, under the full conviction that the *phuca* was coming up the cliff to them.

"The Almighty is impatient, I believe," said Pryce, when he had reached his own door, "he will wait no longer. There is no use in my hoping to escape—I must do it at last; an' I oughtn't to be dragged and frightened into it this way, so that there'll be no thanks to me in the end."

Notwithstanding this wholesome reflection, the weakness of the man's nature was such, that many days elapsed before he could prevail on himself to put in act any portion of the measures necessary for the accomplishment of his resolution. Even after he had learned from a neighbour that Dorgan's sentence had already passed, and that the day was appointed on which he was to be executed, in the neighbourhood where the offence had taken place, he sustained many terrific struggles with his conscience, before he could bring himself to form a full and unreserved intention of making the disclosure, whatever it might be, which oppressed his soul. He felt his fears, at one time, muster on him in such excess as to overpower, for the moment, every other consideration besides that of his immediate personal safety; and at another, the recollection of the perils he had undergone, and the uncertain tenure of his own life, which they manifested to him, renewed his remore and his terror of another more powerful tribunal than that which here awaited him. He recollected, too, amid his merely selfish reflections, the destitution which must attend the lonely old age of his unhappy parent, when he shou'd be no longer able to minister to her wants, as he had done from his youth upwards; but again he recollected that a superior duty called him away, and he resolved to

commit her fortunes to the care of the Being who summoned him from her side by warnings so singular and impressive—warnings, however fearful they might seem, which it would not, perhaps, require much enthusiasm to attribute to the mercy shown on behalf of this single virtue, which looked so lonely and beautiful amid the darkness and the multiplicity of his crimes.

Dorgan in the meantime was left to meditate, in the solitude of a condemned cell, on the singular fatality of the circumstances which had conducted him to it. The ceremony of a trial has been so often and so well delineated, and the facts that were proved on that of Dorgan were so merely a repetition of those which have already been laid before the reader in the account of the coroner's inquest, that we have esteemed it unnecessary to go at length into the subject. Whatever amusement the reader might find in the blunders of Irish witnesses, or the solecisms of an Irish court of justice—these afforded but little subject of merriment to our poor hero, who, in spite of the confident anticipations which he had expressed to the coroner, beheld himself placed within the peril of a disgraceful death at the very moment when he expected to enter on the enjoyment of a life of domestic comfort and quiet happiness—happiness which was so justly earned by a youth of exertion and providence. Neither had he the comfort of leaving on earth a single heart that was impressed with the conviction of his innocence. Unjustly as he had been treated by the world, his was not one of those natures which could take refuge in misanthropy from the agony of disappointed feelings; and he longed—anxiously longed—for some opportunity of clearing himself at least in the opinion of one individual. But the instant after, he reproached himself for this wish, as selfish and unworthy. "No!" said he, "her knowledge of my innocence, obtained only through my assertion, would not save my life, and could only have the effect of torturing her with the consciousness

of having assisted in the destroying it. Let her never know it. What good would it do me to be remembered by her as other than she now thinks me? Would it restore life to my buried bones, or enable me to enjoy what I have lost? It would not; therefore I will leave it to Providence to keep the question of my guilt or innocence revealed or hidden as he pleases; doing only that which in justice and duty I am bound to do, to remove the false impression from the minds of my fellow-countrymen."

While he thus revolved these things in his mind, the door of the cell was opened, and the sheriff, attended by two officers and a clergyman, entered. In spite of all the efforts which he had made to establish his resolution, so as to support him firmly through this fatal moment, Dorgan felt a cold thrill shooting through all his limbs, when it actually arrived, and it was not without considerable difficulty that he could so far command his heart as to understand what the officer was saying to him. However perfectly we may, to our own thought, bend up our minds to the endurance of any dreadful extremity, and however satisfied we may be to abandon all expectation of avoidance or escape—it is certain that, until the very instant of its accomplishment has arrived, an unacknowledged, unconscious hope will yet continue lingering about the heart, the discomfiture of which (as it gives place at length to black and absolute despair) is more terrific than the very separation of our two-fold existence itself. Our unfortunate hero leaned heavily on the clergyman while the death-warrant was read over. The hand-cuffs were then struck off, as if for the purpose of mocking him with a freedom which he never could enjoy; and a man, covered from head to foot in a thick blanket, at sight of whom, Dorgan shuddered to the very centre of his being, approached him with a halter, on which the awful noose was already formed, in his hand. He lifted it for the purpose, as is usual, of suffering Dorgan to carry it to

the place of execution; but the latter recoiled with horror at this apparently unneedful cruelty.

"It must be done," said the sheriff; "put it over his head."

"Remember heaven," said the clergyman—"will you refuse to imitate its Monarch? He bore his cross to Calvary."

Nothing affects the heart more deeply, at a moment of this kind, than a sentiment of religion. The tears suddenly rushed into Dorgan's eyes, and bowing his head in silence, he suffered the ignominious badge to be laid on his neck without farther question.

"Why is the prisoner not dressed in the goal-clothes?" said the sheriff.

"There was no order given, sir," said the goaler, an' I'm afeerd 'twould be late wit uz, now."

"No matter," replied the sheriff, "it will answer as it is. Let him die in the clothes in which the deed was done."

Dorgan instantly raised his head from its drooping position, and looking calmly and fixedly on the officer of the law, said: "Let me die, sir, in the clothes which I wore while engaged in the service of my country. Her uniform will never be disgraced by a death that is not merited, although it be shameful."

"You persist then in declaring your innocence?" asked the officer.

"I did not intend, sir, to have repeated what I already said; and *that* last word escaped me unawares; but since you put the question, justice compels me to give you an answer. I here solemnly declare in the presence of these men, my accusers and my executioners, as well as in the presence of that God before whose throne I must shortly stand, that I am now about to die the death of a murdered man. Yes—ye are about to do a murder—and it is more for your sakes than mine, that I bid you take the warning. The

day will come, sir, when you will remember my words with sorrow. I pray Heaven that you may have no heavier feeling to strive against. You, father, were one of the witnesses against me; when the day arrives, as it may before long, that shall make my innocence appear—all I ask, sir, is—that you will pause, and weigh the matter well with yourself before you throw in your hard word against a poor fellow-creature's life. Remember these words. I hope that my fate will teach the gentlemen that have the lives of the poor in their hands to proceed very cautiously in future, before they take circumstances for certainty. I am ready to attend you, Mr. Sheriff."

Two cars (in English, carts) were placed outside the gaol, in one of which Dorgan and the clergyman were placed, while the other was occupied by the blanketed personage above-mentioned, who immediately secreted himself, amid the shouts and groans of the populace, under the straw which was placed in it for that purpose. As the cars were about to move forward, a woman passed through the guard, and grasped the rail of that which contained Dorgan, who was deeply absorbed at the moment, in the discourse which the clergyman directed to him. One of the soldiers perceived, and striking her on the shoulder with the butt end of his musket, bid her go back.

"One word, sodger darlen—let me only spake a word to the boy, an' I'll be off. Mr. Dorgan! Don't you hear, sir?"

Dorgan lifted up his eyes, and started back with sudden terror, as he beheld the Card-drawer, his evil prophet, looking into his eyes, with her finger raised in the action of beckoning or inviting his attention. The clergyman also recognised her at the same instant.

"Wretched impostor!" he exclaimed, "how dared you force your way hither? Is it not enough that you mislead fools in their health, but you must trouble the hope of the dying, as you do now?"

"No trouble in life, your reverence, only just to spake

one word to the boy. Mr. Dorgan, there's one gay me a message to you, sir—to say—whisper hether——"

"Remove that woman," said the sheriff.

"I say, you mizzuz!" said a soldier, elbowing her from the car.

"Only one word, sodger, dear darlen—"

"Remove her, I say!—"

"One word—O darlen sodger, don't kill me with the plunderpush—Mr. Duke, keep up your sperrits—for there's one that 'ill——"

The remainder of the speech (if it were uttered) was unheard by the ears for which it was intended, as the speaker was forced back into the centre of the noisy press, and the party proceeded on their route.

The day was as dreary as the occasion. The remark, so popular in Ireland, that there never is an assize week without rain, was in this instance justified by a thick mizzle which made the air dull and gloomy, and covered the trees and herbage with a hoar and dimly glittering moisture. There was no wind, and the distant surface of the river, as they passed in the direction of its mouth, was covered by a mantle of gray and eddying mist, through which the shadow of a dark and flagging sail, or the naked masts of an anchoring vessel were at intervals visible. The crowd which had accompanied the party to the outskirts of the city, dropped off gradually as they proceeded into the country, until they were left to prosecute their dreary journey with no other attendants than the few whose interest in the prisoner's fate had induced them to come from the coast for the purpose of witnessing his trial.

It was late in the afternoon before they arrived at Carrigaholt. As the cars were descending an eminence in the neighbourhood, Dorgan cast his eyes towards the west, and beheld, on the very spot where he had parted with his love before his departure to join his ship, and where the sweetest hours of their first and declared affection had been passed, the

dreadful engine erected, on which he was within another hour to lose a life which but a few days before, he would not have given for that of a purpled monarch. A great multitude of people encompassed the spot, among whom might be discerned the light blue dresses of the fish-jolters from the coast; the rough and half-sailor-like persons of the fishermen; the great-coated and comfortably appointed farmers from the interior; nearly all of those whom he beheld having been at one time or another the partakers of some hours of youthful enjoyment with the victim of the sacrifice, in his days of careless boyhood. Seated on a green bank, at two or three hundred paces distant from the gallows, were a group of persons, comprising a soldier and two sailors, the same who were witnesses to Dorgan's first landing, during their watch at the signal tower on the evening of his arrival.

"I say, you land-lobster there," said the hero of the draught-board, "will you douce your sky-tackle there, and let us have a peep at the fun. A messmate! I'd rather than a gallooner it had been a red-jacket instead of a true blue. You have the wind o' me there, Will."

"I say, Jack!" the soldier replied, turning his head round, "you mind the Papist that made the bull that night."

"Ay—ay—"

"There he's over; speaking to that elderly lady with the pipe in her mouth."

"Eh? Why, unreeve my clue lines, Will, if that an't the very lubber I met in the larboard field yonder, this morning, abaft the tower. I'll tell you now how it was—I saw his pennant flying on the lee, and took him for our cook at the tower; so I made sail—he stood off—I gave chase—he tacked and stood across the meadow—I squared my yard, out studding-sails—sung out 'steady'—poured in a broadside, and ran alongside to see my mistake just as he weathered the gap in the hedge. 'My eye,' says I, 'here's a go—I took you for our cook.' 'No, sir,' says he,

'I'm for the hanging match, can you tow me on the way?' 'To be sure I can,' says I—'bout ship and sheer off yonder; when you come abaft the water-mill, belay sheets and tacks, and stand off close to the wind's eye for the potato field—then bear away for the bog—sing out a-head, and if they won't open the gate, 'bout ship again; loose your main sheet—make for the white cottage—gibe—and come out upon the highway—crowd all your canvass, and run right a-head for the gallows."

"Haw! haw! And what did the Hirish Roman Papist say to you?"

"He stood with his mouth open, gaping like an empty scuttle-butt. The fellow never heard English in his life before. Oy say, you Papist Paddy, you, come here and make us a bull, and you shall have a glass o' grog when I'm purser."

The person whom he addressed was standing at a few paces distant, occupied with far other and deeper thoughts than those which suggested the holiday converse of the last speakers. His eye was fixed on the place of execution, while he received some message from an old and miserably attired woman, which seemed to fill him with anxiety and disappointment.

He turned on the sailor a ghastly and fearful eye, but made no answer to his words.

"Never look so cloudy about it, messmate," the latter continued in an unmoved tone—"Cheer up, man, the rope is not twisted for your neck yet. Jack's alive; who's for a row? Never say die while there's a shot in the locker. Whup!"

"It would become you, av you're a Christian yourself, to conduct yourself wit' more feeling and more decency an' the breath goen to be taken out of a poor fellow-cratur," said the woman.

"He's some cousin of yours, mistress, by the kindness you show him."

"Ayeh, my dear," the Card-drawer retorted, plucking the man's blue jacket significantly—"'tisn't my unyform he wears."

A shout of laughter burst from the sailor's companions at this sally, as the old woman hastened off, audibly humming over a stanza of the popular ballad,

"An' as for sailors I don't admire them—
I wouldn't live as a sailor's bride,
For in their coorten they're still discoorsen
Of things consarnen the ocean wide."

While the countryman, who had shown such marks of intense interest in the scene, disappeared amid the crowd that surrounded the place of execution.

The car had already halted at the foot of the fatal tree, and Dorgan, his limbs stiff from the maintenance of the same position during the long journey, was ordered to stand erect. He opened his eyes heavily, and gazed around on the multitude of faces that were turned towards his—he looked on the fields and meadows in which his childhood had been passed, and felt his heart almost break with the long farewell which it sent forth in a sigh, that

"—seemed to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being."

The awful preparations were already completed—Dorgan's hands were pinioned—the dreadful knot affixed—and the whole scene, the hills and cottages and buzzing multitude, swam and reeled before his eyes—when the ghost-like person in the blanket approached, and uncovering from beneath his woollen envelope a bony and muscular hand, extended it to our hero, saying at the same time,

"*Therom-a-lauv a gra bawn.** Forgive an' forget.—Sorrow better boy ever I see die in his shoes. Say you won't be haunten me for this—it's only my juty."

* Give me the hand, my white darling.

Dorgan, half-stupified, gave him his hand in token of his forgiveness, and at the same instant felt the death-cap pulled over his eyes, while the command to "draw away the car" sounded in his ears.

"Hold!" cried the clergyman to the owner of the vehicle, who with much simplicity had taken the collar and was about to lead the horse away, not considering that by so doing he would in fact be the executioner of the convict. "Let the man who is engaged for the purpose be the shedder of the forfeited blood," continued his reverence. "Do not move the horse."

"A' then your reverince might just let matters go on as they were," said the finisher of the law. "It's all one to the boy who does that job for him."

The pause saved Dorgan's life. At the moment when the hangman was about to lay his fingers on the collar, the crowd near him separated with much noise and confusion, and a man darting through the passage and through the file of soldiers, seized the rude bridle, and striking the executioner so as to make him reel and stagger a few paces, cried out in a hoarse and loud voice, "Come down, Mr. Dorgan, come down off o' the car. Let him go, Mr. Sheriff, dear, for the man is here that did the deed."

The sheriff, in the midst of the confusion that prevailed, imagining that a rescue was about to be attempted, had cocked a pistol and placed it to the head of his prisoner. He now suffered the muzzle to fall, and gazed in astonishment on Kinchela, who stood, pale, trembling, and listless, at the horse's head. The truth flashed on the clergyman's mind, as he recognised in Pryce the same individual who sat with Dorgan in the parlour of the Bee-hive on the evening before the murder. He suggested to the sheriff the propriety of inquiry.

"It may be a cheat," said the officer, "and if so, how dreadfully cruel will be the disappointment to the prisoner after this suspense."

"Let the man be summoned hither and questioned at once," said the priest.

Kinchela was called accordingly, but he was unable, for a long time, to answer, or even to comprehend the questions that were put to him. The excess of his terror had deprived him for the moment of all consciousness: he saw a thousand faces flitting about him, and heard a thousand voices at his ear, but was totally incapable of appreciating their meaning or their wishes. The sight of Dorgan, still pinioned and blindfolded in the car, at length startled him from his stupor; he suddenly extended his arms, and repeated with great violence, "Come down, again, I tell you, Dorgan! Mr. Sheriff, let go Mr. Dorgan, for he's innocent. I am the man that done it."

"That did what?"

"That murdered old M'Loughlen!" Kinchela exclaimed, with a gesture of deep horror, "an' here I'm come to answer for it now."

"If the man should be a maniac," said the sheriff.

"Oh, I wisht to the heavens I was!" Kinchela exclaimed. "No, no; I was mad when I done it, it's in my sober senses I come to declare it. Let Mr. Dorgan loose, an' tie me up in his place, an' heavens bless you an' don't keep me long in pain, for I hear hangen is a fearful death."

After some consultation, the sheriff agreed to take upon him all the responsibility of delay; the unhappy Dorgan was unbound and removed from the car. He looked drearily around him, and leaned on the clergyman for support, while the change in his fortunes was communicated to him by the sheriff.

"In the middle o' the night that same time," said Kinchela, in answer to the inquiries which were made respecting the manner of the occurrence, "I made my way into Dorgan's room, an' I took his clothes that wer lyen on the chair, an' dressed myself in 'em, an' in them I did the murder. I don't know what made me tell it, but my con-

science was killen o' me intirely. Mr. Dorgan, I have only one word to say to you before we part. My poor old mother, that—" the word stuck in his throat, and he could only look his meaning through his tears.

"Never fear for her," said Dorgan, "she shall be provided for. Oh, Pryce, I little thought—Well, there's no use in talking about it now."

The sheriff now gave orders to take Kinchela into custody, detaining Dorgan at the same time under arrest, until his sentence should be rescinded according to the usual form. The crowd separated in great confusion.

It now became a point of consideration with her friends to devise the most easy method of breaking the joyous intelligence of her lover's innocence and liberation to Pennie M'Loughlen. Although the mode of her life and education exempted her in general from the danger which might be apprehended in such cases to a person of more refined habits or a more nervous constitution; yet it was conjectured, with much truth and sagacity, that the repetition of so many dreadful shocks within so short a space of time could not fail to be injurious in its operation on a mind not altogether destitute of sensibility. If the reader have curiosity or good feeling enough to induce him to entertain an interest in the contrivances of their rustic wits on this occasion, we will venture to prolong the narrative to its real consummation, the reconciliation of the lovers.

Pennie had removed immediately after the day on which her father's funeral took place to the house of a relative—a "*dale*ing woman," in the village of Carrigaholt. A few days after Dorgan's formal pardon had been obtained, his fair accuser being yet in ignorance of all the events which succeeded the trial: she was seated in a small clean room, called a parlour, inside the shop, in which her relative appeared, bustling about in all the conscious satisfaction and importance of a thriving huxter, among her closely-packed assortment of haberdashery, reaping-hooks, penknives, no-

tation-books, *reading-made-easys*, snuff and tobacco, flax-seed, prayer-books, halters, waistcoat-patterns, plates, dishes of the most flaming colours, with a small stock of grocery, and, in short, every description of merchandise which might by any possible contingency become needful to the comfort of the good folks in her neighbourhood. The door of the little parlour was left ajar, so that our heroine, while occupied in her usual duty of instructing her infant cousin in her rudimental lessons, could hear all that passed without. A snug-looking farmer was bargaining at one side of the shop for a new "Poor Man's Manual," while his wife, a quiet, elderly woman, neatly attired in a scarlet rug cloak (a favourite article of dress among the fair ones of the coast), and a decent snow-white handkerchief simply tied in matron fashion over her head, was turning over some pieces of gingham in an opposite corner.

"Sixpence!" the Dinmont of Clare exclaimed in a tone of expression of strong surprise, while by a jerk of the frame he tossed his heavy great-coat higher on his shoulders, as if preparing at once to depart. "No—Mrs. Rahilly—take four-pence for the book, an' here 'tis for you."

"I never bought it for themoney," said Mrs. Rahilly, replacing the book on the shelf.

"Well—what's your lowest offer then!—I don't like, as we're ould friends, to lave the money any where else though I protest to my conshins, Davy Molony below street offered me the same book for four-pence ha'p'ny."

Mrs. Rahilly paused. "Well then—bein as you say, an ould cushtomer—split the defference, an' say no more about it."

"That I may be blest af I do, now. Here's four-pence ha'p'ny, an' I never 'll go back o' what I say."

"Have it for the fi'-penny."

"Oh, ax wool of a goat—what talk it is!"

"Well, may be *herself* would want another."

"Oh, never heed me," said the woman smiling and laying

down the pattern of gingham, "af it's prayer-books you're talking of, I can say my rosary on my fingirs."

"You are attending to those people in the shop, instead of minding your task," said Pennie, chiding her little pupil. "Keep your eyes on the book now. Read on. 'Thirty days—'"

The child read, in a high singing tone, the lesson from her marble-covered notation-book, "Thirty days hath September, April, June an' November," &c. On a sudden she pansed, and looking into her cousin's face, said, "Pennie, are you goen to die?"

The young maiden started at the suddenness of the question, and then looking fixedly in surprise on the child, "Why do you ask such a question as that, honey?"

"Becase Patcy Magrath, he toult me that his mammy said you wor, and that she seen it by you, for you wor growing thinner an' thinner an' paler an' paler every day, an' that you'd die before long an' be buried like uncle."

"I hope not," said the poor girl smiling rather anxiously.

"I hope not aither—for what 'ud *I* do at all then? I wouldn't have any body to tache me my lessons or do a haiporth. Aunt Rahilly doesn't know B from a bull's foot, although she pretends to a dale. I know what I'll do af you die, I'll marry Patcy Magrath, for he's a fine scholar—that's when we're big enough—an' he'll larn me— but what 'll I do till then?"

"Mind your tasks, and do as you are bid, honey, and say your prayers regularly, and God will be a father, and uncle, and cousin, and all to you. You need fear nothing so long as you do not displease him."

"That's just the way the man with all the wool about his head talked to me in the coort-house, when I toult upon Dorgan for murderen uncle——What ails you now, Pennie? I can't say a haiporth to you ever since uncle was kilt, but you begin to cry that way. Are you sick? Be-

cause if you are, I'll go an' get a physic o' salts from Aunt Rahilly. She has a tub o' salts abroad that would cure the world."

At this moment, the sound of Dorgan's name, pronounced by a voice that was familiar to her, in the shop, struck on the elder maiden's ear and prevented her reply. She put the child from her with a sudden "husht" and remained in an attitude of the most anxious attention, with her ear turned towards the half-open door.

"I wonder who is it that's minden the people in the shop *now*," said the child. "Well, Pennie, af you won't hear me my lesson, I'll go and play tig-touch-iron wit' Patey Magrath in the haggard, an' I'll have it for you agen supper."

She slipped out of the house through a back door, leaving Pennie too perfectly absorbed in the conversation which was now passing in the shop, to answer or even to notice her departure.

"An' is it now they're thinken o' throwen a doubt upon his guilt?" said the farmer. "Here—take a pinch, sir, while the box is open. The little dust o' snuff I had isn't much the better o' you since you took that *dhudogue** out of it, any way. But as for Dorgan, why I seen the guard goen to the gallows with him myself, though I couldn't stop to see the hangen."

"That may be compatible with the limits o' veracity," said the person who had just entered, "but it is an undeniable fact, that Dorgan has been approved innocent—and Kinchela the fisherman from the Head, has come forth and prosecuted his confession before the magistrate as the real perpetraathur."

The conversation was here cut short by a deep groan, and a sound, as of a heavy weight descending, in the inner parlour. The plan which had been constructed for breaking the matter to Pennie was completely baffled by the

* Pinch.

awkwardness of the well-meaning pedant, who blurted out that part of his intelligence which comprised the most horrible inference in the very commencement. She had scarcely heard it uttered, when her senses failed her, and she sunk on the floor in a strong convulsion fit. When the exertions of her friends, who at once hastened to her assistance, had recalled her to some degree of consciousness, she beheld, among the many faces which surrounded her, those of the clergyman of her parish before-mentioned, and the unfortunate agent of the discovery she had made. The former, having ascertained the degree of strength which might now be expected from her, motioned every person out of the room, with the exception of her relative. He then took Pennie's hand kindly.

"Are you prepared," he said, "to thank your God for a more pleasing piece of news than that which you have just heard?"

The girl looked in his face with a gaze of bewildered inquiry. Her lips muttered, as if unconsciously, the word "Dorgan," as the thought which floated uppermost in her imagination.

"Read there," said the clergyman, putting into her hands a letter, folded.

The blood rushed forcibly to her cheek, brow, and her very finger-ends, and again recoiled, so as to leave her pale as marble, when she recognised the hand of Dorgan in the superscription. She quickly opened the note, and read as follows:

My Dear Pennie,

(For I may once more with a free heart, thanks be to the Most High, call you by that name). It has pleased Heaven to make good the word which I spoke on that unfortunate day, when I told my judges that I felt it within me that I should not die for a deed of which, the

Lord knows my heart, and which is since proved, I was wholly clear and innocent. I have got my pardon—for it seems it is a form of law, that when an innocent man is convicted, after suffering imprisonment, and all hardship and anxiety, instead of his judges asking *his* forgiveness, 'tis *he* that has to get pardon from them, for being so unfortunate as to be condemned and very nearly hung in the wrong. Now, Pennie, this comes by the hand of Father Mahony, to tell you, that of all things in the world, I admire and love you for your conduct on that day, and all through this dreadful business. I know well, my dear girl, how your heart is accusing you at this moment, but give no heed to such thoughts, I beg of you, and let them be as far from your mind as they are from mine, for you did your duty nobly: and Lord Nelson, my glorious and lamented commander, who little thought I'd be brought into such trouble on account of the victory he died in obtaining, could have done no more if he was in your place. I hope, therefore, you will show your good sense, and think no more of what is passed, but take this as the true feeling of his heart from him who is yours until death.

DUKE DORGAN.

To Penelope M'Loughlen,
at Mrs. Rahilly's Shop, Carrigaholt.

The heroic generosity with which her lover thus rose superior to all the petty resentments and jealousies, which are incidental to the passion, even in the most vigorous and straight-forward minds, sunk deeply into the heart of the young woman. Although the love which she felt for Dorgan was of that genuine and unaffected kind, which is wholly a stranger to the delicate intricacies and refined difficulties attendant on the progress of this most capricious of affections, in the bosoms of those who boast a higher rank than hers, yet she could not but be keenly sensible that she had failed

in one of its most essential qualities—an unbounded and immoveable confidence. She raised her eyes, which were overflowing with tears of mingled shame and gratitude, towards the clergyman, when a creaking noise at the door attracted her attention. It opened, and Dorgan entered. Her agitation and confusion became now extreme, nor were they diminished when her lover advanced to her side with a respectful gentleness, and said:—

"Pennie, you see we meet happier and sooner than we expected. I hope you'll be said by what I mentioned to you in the letter, and give me your hand now in token that all is forgotten."

"I give you my hand freely, Dorgan," the girl replied, still blushing deeply, "and bless your good, generous heart; but all cannot be forgotten. I may be friends with you again: but I never can be friends with myself as long as ever I live. There is a load now laid upon my mind, that never will be taken off until the day I die."

Dorgan, assisted by his reverend friend, applied himself, and as it proved, not unsuccessfully, to combat this feeling; after which the latter departed, having seized the opportunity of impressing on both the obligations which they owed to Providence for the turn which their fortunes had taken.

The imagination of the reader may be safely trusted with the details of the ensuing days; the penitence of Kinchela, and the distraction of his aged mother, who could scarcely be persuaded, even by his own assertion, that the son, whom she had found so faultless, could thus suddenly break upon her knowledge in a character so new and hideous. Dorgan took care, on his establishment in his native village, to fulfil the promise which he had made to Kinchela.

About a year after this, the handsome Mrs. Dorgan was sitting at the door of her barn, superintending a number of girls who were employed in skutching flax in the interior, when her eye was attracted by an old woman, who raised the latch of the farm-yard gate, and, making a low courtesy,

said, "You wouldn't have any kid-skins, rabbit-skins, or goose-quills to sell, ma'am?"

Mrs. Dorgan coloured to the very border of her rich tresses when she recognised, and was recognised in turn by the Card-drawer.

"Well, darlen, didn't it come true what I toult you that mornen behind the stacks?" she asked, with a knowing wink.

"It did; but I have learned to know since, that it was more by your good luck than your skill, that you hit the mark so cleverly, You said that himself was far away at the time too, and he was close at our side."

"A' then sure he ought to have more sense than to trust me—a man that spoke like a priest, they tell me, before the crowner. But all that is over with me now; for sure I paid Father Mahony better than five pounds restitution money, no longer ago than istherday, an I'm to be tuk into the pale of his flock agen, wit a trifle more honesly made wit hare-skins, and writen-quills, an one thing or another that way—an I'm to live quietly, an to have nothen more to say to the CARD DRAWING."

The foregoing Tale was suggested by an occurrence which took place some years since on the estate and even close to the demesne gate of the late John Waller, Esq., of Castletown in the County of Limerick, a name which will ever be dear and venerable to the hearts of all who remember him who bore it. A cruel murder had been perpetrated. Many persons were apprehended and executed for the crime and amongst these a sailor who had only returned to his native village the very evening before the murder was committed! The story went that his clothes had been purloined during his sleep by one of the real delinquents, who escaped detection in the disguise, while the identity of the dress tended to place the crime at the door of the unoffending sailor.

END OF CARD DRAWING.

SONNETS—INTRODUCTORY.

I.

Glens of the west! the days are past and done,
Since, while the north wind howled amidst your bowers,
And hurrying through his course of frequent showers,
Sped, pale, mid winter mists the southern sun:
When the vext Shannon, rid by ruffian gales
That whipped his foaming sides with tireless hand,
Shook his white mane along the darkening strand,
And bounded fiercely by the leafless vales:
Since—when our turfen fire made glad the hearth,
And shone on merry faces, gathered near
With untaught song, light jest, and drowsy story—
We blest the wintry eve, with gentle mirth—
Or in soft sorrow lent a pensive ear,
To tales of Erin's elder strength and faded glory.

II.

Ambition, absence, death, have thinned the number
Of those who met beside your evening fires:
Some, gathered to the ashes of our sires,
On yonder sacred mount in silence slumber:
Some, scattered far, extend their longing hands
Towards some loved shades, and lonely walks in vain,
For never shall your sun behold again
Their early foot-prints on your dewy lands—
And never more within that ruined gate,
Shall their blithe voices cheer the hush'd domain—
Yet some are left to pace your dreary ways,
Some cherished friends, in whose sweet circle late,
Old joys came hovering round my heart again—
Faint echoes of the bliss we knew in early days.

THE HALF SIR.

CHAPTER I.

A gentleman that loves no noise.—*The Silent Woman.*

The Wren-boys of Shanagolden, a small village in the south-west of Ireland, were all assembled pursuant to custom on the green before the chapel-door, on a fine frosty morning, being the twenty-sixth of December, or Saint Stephen's day—a festival yet held in much reverence in Munster, although the Catholic church has for many years ceased to look upon it as a holiday of "obligation."* Seven or eight handsome young fellows, tricked out in ribbons of the gayest colours, white waistcoats and stockings, and furnished with musical instruments of various kinds—a fife, a pipolo, an old drum, a cracked fiddle, and a set of bagpipes—assumed their place in the rere of the procession, and startled the yet slumbering inhabitants of the neighbouring houses, by a fearfully discordant prelude. Behind those came the Wren-boy, *par excellence*, a lad who bore in his hands a holly-bush, the leaves of which were interwoven with long streamers of red, yellow, blue, and white ribbon; all which finery, nevertheless, in no way contributed to reconcile the little mottled tenant of the bower (a wren which was tied by the leg to one of the boughs) to his state of durance. After the Wren-boy

* A holiday rendering it obligatory on all the members of the Church to hear mass and refrain from servile work.

came, a promiscuous crowd of youngsters, of all ages under fifteen, composing just such a little ragged rabble as one observes attending the band of a marching regiment on its entrance into a country town, shouting, hallooing, laughing, and joining in apt chorus with the droning, shrilling, squeaking, and rattling of the musicians of the morn.

After proceeding along the road for about half a mile, the little rustic procession turned aside into a decent avenue, which led, in the antique fashion (that is to say, by a line so direct, that if you rested a musket on the lock of the gate, you could put a bullet in the very centre panel of the hall-door), to a house no less quaint in its form than its approach—a square-built pile, standing bolt upright on the top of a hillock, with a plain rough-cast front, in which were two rows of small square windows, and a hall-door with two steps leading up to it—presenting, in short, such a façade as children are accustomed to cut out of paper—so flat, so regular, and quakerly. A line of soldier-like looking elms ran along the avenue wall on either side, and filed off with the most unexceptionable precision to the rere of the building, taking the kitchen-garden in flank, and falling into a hollow square about the paddock and *haggart.*

Before the hall-door was a semi-circular gravel plot, in which the avenue lost itself, as a canal terminates in its basin. Around this space the procession formed, and the Wren-boy, elevating his bush, gave out the opening stave of the festive chant, in which the whole rout presently joined:

> "*The Wran! the Wran! the king of all birds,*
> *St Stephen's day was caught in the furze;*
> *Although he's little, his family's great*
> *Get up, fair ladies! and give us a trate!*
> *And if your trate be of the best,*
> *In heaven we hope your soul will rest!*"

As the din of the chorus died away, one of the lower windows was thrown up, and two of the "fair ladies" ap-

pealed to, presented themselves to the praises and blessings of the admiring rustics. One of them could scarcely have justified the epithet—she was of a dark-brown complexion, and a slight shadowing across the forehead would have led a person not disposed to argue favourably of the indication, to suppose that she had already declined, and yet not much, into the vale of years. Thirty or two-and-thirty might have brought the change. There was, moreover, a proud fiery lustre in her eye which would account perhaps for many of the invidious lines. The smile, nevertheless, which she instantly accorded to the villagers, showed that her pride was not the defect of her heart or disposition, but the accident of a conscious superiority either of rank or of mind. Her companion was a pretty lively girl, with health on her cheeks, and mirth and laughter in her eye—and nothing more.

"Which o' the two is Miss O'Brien?" asked one of the mummers, in a whisper, to his companion.

"Can't you know the real lady?" was the reply. "Don't you see it in her eye, and in her smile. There she is—the dark one."

"Come, plase your honour, ladies, ordher soomthen out to the Wran. He come a long way to see ye'r honours this morning. Long life to you, Mister Falahee! The Wran thanks you, sir," as a half-crown, flung by an elderly gentleman who made his appearance at the window, jingled on the gravel-walk. "And *sonahee** to you, Miss Mary, and that before the frost is off the ground; we are goen to call on Misther Charles himself next."

The younger of the ladies blushed deep crimson.

"Stay until Davy gives you a drink, lads," said Mr. Falahee.

A new uproar of thanks, and "long lives," and sundry other benedictions, followed this invitation, in the midst of which old Davy made his appearance at the hall-door

* Good spouse.

with a tin-can full of cider of his own brewage, and a smile on his wrinkled face, that showed with how much good will he fell into the hospitable humour of his master. The lads swarmed about him as flies do about a lump of sugar.

"Have you been at Mr. Hamond's yet, lads?" inquired Mr. Falahee.

"Aw! not we, sir. It's always the way with the Wran to pay his compliments to the real gentlemen first."

"Why—" said the worthy but flattered host, with an ill-suppressed smile, "is not Mr. Hamond a real gentleman?"

"No, plase your honour, not a real undoubted gentleman that way, all out."

"I'm sure Castle Hamond is as fine a property as there is in the barony."

"O we don't mean to dispute that, sir. But himself, you see, he's nothing. What is he but a bit of a half sir?"

"A what?" exclaimed the elder lady.

"A half sir, ma'am," turning toward her with great respect, and giving his forelock a drag which seemed to signify that had he got such a thing as a hat on, he would have taken it off to her honour.

"What do you call a half sir?"

"A man that has not got any blood in him, ma'am."

"A man that has got no blood in him!"

"Noen; any more than meself. A sort of a small gentleman, that way: the singlings of a gentleman,* as it were. A made man—not a born gentleman. Not great, all out, nor poor, that way entirely. Betuxt and betune, as you may say. Neither good pot-ale, nor yet strong whiskey. Neither beef nor vale. Castle Hamond! What's Castle Hamond to me, as long as the master wouldn't conduct himself proper! A man that wouldn't go to a hunt, nor a race-course, nor a cock-fight, nor a hurlen-match, nor a

* The *singlings* are the first running of spirits in the process of distillation

dance, nor a fencen-bout, nor any one born thing. Sure that's no gentleman! A man that gives no parties, nor was never known yet to be drunk in his own house. O poh!—A man that was never seen to put his hand in his pocket on a frosty mornen and say to a poor man, 'Hoy, hoy! my good fellow, here's a tinpenny for you, and get a drop o' somethen warn and comfortable agen the day! A man that was never be any mains *overtaken in liquor* himself, nor the cause of anybody else being so, either. Sure such a man as that has no heart?"

"Tell me, my good lad," said the lady, with much seriousness, "is this Mr. Hamond a miser?"

"O dear, no, ma'am," exclaimed his accuser, "nobody has anything to charge agen him on that score, I'm sure."

"Does he ever assist the poor in his neighbourhood?"

"Indeed that he does; there's no gainsaying that any way."

"Is he ever found in the cottages of the sick and the distressed."

"There's no doubt o' that. He is indeed. The time the faver was ragen there last summer, he was like a priest or a doctor, goen about from bedside to bedside, ordering wine here, and blankets there, and paying for every thing out of his own purse. I declare ma'am," the speaker continued, warming with his subject so as totally to forget his late invective, "'twould be an admiration to you to know the *sighth* o' money he laid out in that way."

"And tell me, did the racing, and cock-fighting and hunting gentlemen do a great deal more? The real gentlemen, I mean."

"Is it they? no—nor half as much, the whole put together."

"But Mr. Hamond has no heart for all that?"

"O— eh?—heart—" the man repeated in a puzzled tone. "He has *relligion*, ma'am—*relligion* and charity —that's what he has."

"Then what you mean by 'heart,' is, I suppose, drunkenness, prodigality, gambling—all, in short, that is opposed to religion and charity?"

"Why then—" after a pause, "heaven forgive uz, I b'lieve that's the manen we put upon it."

"And Mr. Hamond has none of that?"

"No, indeed, ma'am."

"I'm satisfied," said the lady, retiring from the window, and leaving the young man a-gape to comprehend her meaning.

In a few minutes the whole procession was again in motion, drumming, squeaking, shouting, and laughing down the avenue. After they had fairly seen them off, Mr. Falahee and his daughter returned to the breakfast table.

"Ho! ho! where is Miss O'Brien gone?" said the old gentleman.

"I declare, I don't know," said an old grandmama, who sat in an arm-chair by the fire-side; "she only took one cup of coffee, and there is her spoon in her saucer—so she wasn't done."

"Has anybody done anything to offend her *to-day?*" said Mr. Falahee, laying an emphasis on the word, as if the *taking* offence were a matter of not unfrequent occurrence.

"I—I'm sure not I, at any rate," said Miss Falahee; "I don't know what to make of her. May be 'twas something the wren-boy said."

"Best send to her," said the old gentleman. "Nelly, go and see what keeps your mistress."

In a few minutes Nelly returned. Her mistress had done breakfast, and was preparing to ride out. She wished to know whether Mr. Falahee would accompany her in the direction of which they had been speaking the day before.

"Oh, certainly," was Mr. Falahee's reply; "unless she is afraid of meeting the *Boocy-man** of the hills, for our

* Analogous to *Green-sleeves* in England.

road lies by Castle Hamond. He'd eat us up in one bit for being of real gentlemanly race, I suppose; or having blood in our veins, as Terry Lenigan says. They say he hates anybody that has got a decent coat on his back, and detests any finery—especially in the fair sex," he added, glancing satirically at the gold chain and cross which encircled the neck of his daughter, "as much as sin itself."

"More, may be, papa," minced out Miss Falahee; "he's a great, rude, good-for-nothing fellow, I'll engage."

"You'd engage what would be very wrong, my dear," said her father. "Mr. Lynch, who is his clergyman as well as ours, assures me that a more charitable, meek-tempered, religious, excellent man does not exist within the precincts of his parish; and that his single infirmity which appears to have been occasioned by some dreadful misfortune in early life, is solely the defect of his brain; and that moreover, it is the constant object of all his exertions to acquire a conquest over himself in this respect. You heard what Terry Lenigan himself said about his conduct to the poor in his neighbourhood, during the fever that raged last summer."

Miss Falahee's reply was cut short by the appearance of a dashing young horseman before the windows. He curbed in the animal gracefully, as he came on the gravel-plot—made a flourishing salute with his hazel switch, as he passed the window at a pretty, mincing trot, and finally dismounted at the hall door.

"There goes another gentleman," said Mr. Falahee; "the Wren-boys were mistaken in supposing they should find Mr. Charles at home. Come, prepare your smiles and your graces now, Mary."

"For shame, papa—you make one blush so! I wish you'd speak to him, gran'ma."

The door was opened before the old dowager could have complied, and in walked a tall, sharp-faced, long-nosed, foolish handsome young man, looking like a preserved Lon-

don street-dandy, of the third or fourth year preceding, and carrying the similitude into his manner and accent; which last was a strange compound of the coarsest Munster brogue, and the most oriental cockney dialect—the latter being superadded during a residence of a few years at the house of a friend who possessed a wharf somewhere between the Minories and Wapping. All this, however, passed for the purest Attic among many of his home friends, and was very instrumental in gaining him the heart of the simple young maiden who rose with all the pretty, panting, palpitating eagerness of unbounded admiration, to receive him.

"Haw! how aw ye, Mistaw Falahee? How d' do mamm? Haw, Mary," he added, extending his hand to his timid, shrinking, and smiling love, with an air of patronage and encouragement, and twice shaking the tips of her fingers, "how d' do, my garl? Be sated, pray." Then throwing himself into an easy chair, extending his legs to their furthest limit on the carpet, pulling up his peaked and polished shirt-collar, to the imminent danger of the tip of his nose, smoothing down his lofty black silk stock, and whisking some dust from the lappel of his green quaker cut coat with the fingers of his glove—"A foine, smawt mawnen, Mistaw Falahee," he proceeded, "I just called in to ask if you were all aloive here."

"Going to course, I suppose?"

"Whoy, yes—oy b'lieve—though the grownd is rawther hawd. No mattaw!" switching his boots, and in the action drawing the rod within an inch of Mary's blue eyes. "Oy'll go aisy enough—I'm cocked."

"Cocked or no, Charles, I wish you would stay with us to-day. I have a great deal to do, and Miss O'Brien wants some person to squire her about."

The long countenance of Mr. Charles Lane became still longer at this request; for, by some unaccountable means, this worthy lady had acquired a strange and disagreeable influence over him—the influence which all persons of real

rank and elegance at all times possess over the vulgar pretender to fashion. The young dandy Munsterman found that a spell was cast upon him the moment he entered Miss O'Brien's presence. His "aws" and his assurance invariably failed him. He spoke little—kept his legs in—buttoned up his side pockets—stole the flaming yellow silk handkerchief out of sight—and, in a word, kept the dandy as much in the background as possible, In vain did he make many strenuous efforts to shake off this secret yoke which the good lady had, quite unconsciously, cast upon him; his struggles (like those of his country) served only to make him feel the weight of his fetters the more severely. In vain did he loll in his chair, pass his fingers about his long and curling hair, and endeavour to swagger himself into a degree of ease and confidence; a single glance sufficed to call him to a still more confused sense of inferiority and mental servitude. In vain did he, when alone, pish! and pooh! at the wrinkled old maid, as in the malice of his heart he *rather* unjustly termed her. In vain did the lady herself (whenever, indeed she thought of the gentleman at all) endeavour by the most winning sweetness and kindness of manner to place him on good terms with himself—nothing could overcome his awe and his dislike. What puzzled and surprised him a great deal, moreover, was, that Mary, who stood quite as much in awe of him as he did of Miss O'Brien, was always perfectly easy and self-possessed in the presence of that formidable lady; so much so, as frequently to fail in the respect which was certainly due from the one to the other.

Notwithstanding all this consciousness, however, and although Mr. Lane felt himself never so uncomfortable as when he was in the presence of Miss O'Brien, an odd kind of infatuation made him constantly seek opportunities to throw himself in her way, always promising himself (what every day's experience told him was not to be fulfilled), that he would find some means or other of impressing her with

the conviction that he was her "equal." Every attention, in consequence, which she condescended to show him (utterly ignorant in the simple singleness of her good heart, of the queer kind of civil war she occasioned in his breast), while it confused and abashed him, did not fail to flatter his vanity; and now, although the tremendous proposition of riding out actually alone with the great personage at first startled and alarmed him, it was not difficult to prevail on him to sacrifice the day's hunting to this opportunity of displaying himself under so many advantages (for he was the best horseman in the country) to the eyes of a person, whose approbation appeared to be of more consequence to him than that of the whole world besides.

He assented, therefore, to Mr. Falahee's arrangement; and thrusting his gloves and the handle of his whip into his hat, took his seat in a more permanent form by the blazing fire, and commenced playing at hot-hands with Mary, until Miss O'Brien should be ready to set out.

We will leave the happy pair in the enjoyment of their intellectual pastime, and follow the Wren-boys, who, having by this time been made somewhat merry by the good treatment they had received at the houses of several other gentlemen, are likely to furnish us with a greater fund of adventure.

They had by this time arrived at an avenue gate, which, from the wildness and singularity of its situation, appeared to constitute the approach of one of the older and more secluded seats which were used by the gentry of the country. The entrance consisted of two massive cut stone piers, surmounted by a pair of battered eagles, and supporting a heavy wooden gate, which was simply fastened in the centre by a loop of hay rope tied to one jamb and thrown over the other. The avenue, which was so overgrown with grass, brambles, and dog-fennel, as to leave little more than the footpath visible in the centre, seemed to intimate either that the mansion to which it led was the property of an absentee, or that it was the residence of some person who was not

anxious to enter into the strife of emulative hospitality with the gentry in his neighbourhood.

"Castle Hamond! Here it is!—*Will* we go up, boys?" asked one of the party.

"I say, no!" exclaimed the Buhal Droileen—whose aristocratic spirit had been rendered still more over-topping than ever by the inspiration of the many sparkling glasses he had tasted since he had first broached his sentiments while Davy broached his cider. "The wran won't show himself to any but a raal gintleman to-day."

"Pch! what is it after all—Isn't he as good as old Falahee if you go to that of it, and he keeps—Remmy O'Lone tells me—that's his own man—the best of every thing, and has a full purse moreover. And he's a Cromwaylian, any way."*

"*Is* he a Cromwaylian?" inquired the refractory wren-boy, trying to steady himself, and moved to a hesitation rather by the prospect of Mr. Hamond's good cheer than by the new point of genealogy that was made out for him. "Can you make it out that he's a Cromwaylian?"

"Sure the world knows it, and many says he's one o' the Bag-and-Bun† men, too."

"Oh—then the Wran will pay him his compliments. Come along, boys." And staggering toward the gate, which he opened after making several efforts to ascertain the precise geography of its fastening, he led the way, shouting and singing by turns, along the mossy and rarely trodden avenue.

In a few minutes they had marshalled themselves before the house (a ruined building, the greater number of the

* The descendants of those who came over with Cromwell.

† The descendants of those who landed at Bag-and-Bun with Richard Fitzstephens, the first British invader of Ireland. Thus the adage—

"At the creek of Bagganbun,
Ireland was ylost and wonne."

windows of which were broken, stuffed with newspapers, pieces of blackened board, and old clothes,) and set up a new stave of their traditional anthem.

"Last Christmas-day I turn'd the spit,
I burn'd my finger—(I feel it yet)—
A cock sparrow flew over the table,
The dish began to fight with the ladle—
The spit got up like a naked man,
And swore he'd fight with the dripping-pan;
The pan got up and cock'd his tail,
And swore he'd send them all to jail!"

The merry makers, however, did not receive so ready a welcome at Castle Hamond as they had done at most other houses. The chorus died away in perfect silence, and the expectant eyes of the singers glanced from casement to casement for several minutes, but no one appeared. Again they raised their voices and were commencing—

"The Wran!—the——"

when a bundle of newspapers was withdrawn from a broken pane, and in their place a head and arm made their appearance. It was a hatchet-face, with a pair of peeping pig's eyes set close (like a fish's) on either side—the month half open, an expression of mingled wonder and curiosity depicted on the features—and a brown straight-haired wig, which time had reduced to a baldness almost as great as that of the head which it covered, shooting down on each side, like a bunch of rushes, towards the shoulders.

"Good morrow, Mr. Remmy," said the young man who had advocated the title of the proprietor of Castle Hamond to the homage of the Wren—"we're come to pay our compliments to the master."

"Whist! whist! dear boys!" exclaimed the head, while the arm and hand were waved toward them in a cautionary manner.

"Poh, what *whisht?* Let him give us something like a gentleman, and we'll whisht as much as he pleases."

"Are ye tired o' ye'r lives? He's like a madman all night. There's nothen for ye."

"D'ye hear what he says, as if it was to a beggarman he'd be talken? Go along in—take your head out o' that, Remmy, if you love it. Nothen for us!—Take your head out o' that again! if you haven't a mind to lave it after you—and no great prize 'twould be to the man that would get it in lose afther you, either."

"It may be a very bad one," said Remmy O'Lone, "and an ill-looking one enough may be, but I'd look a dale droller widout it for all that."

"Well, an' are we to get nothen for the Wran? Is that the way of it? Come, boys, one groan for the old miser—"

"Whisht! agin! O boys, for shame! Well, aisy while and I'll see what's to be done. But don't make a noise for your lives, for he didn't lave his room yet."

Remmy withdrew his head from the window, replaced the newspapers, and walked in a meditative way along a dark flagged hall leading to many of the principal sleeping chambers of the old mansion. He paused near one of the doors, and after many gestures of agitation and distress, he tapped softly with the knuckle of his forefinger upon the centre panel, bending his ear toward the key-hole to ascertain as much as possible of the effect which his intrusion produced.

"Who's there?" was asked in a tone of some vexation.

"Are you awake, sir?" said Remmy, in a soft and conciliating accent, such as a man might use in making acquaintance with a fierce mastiff.

"If I were asleep, do you think I'd ask the question, Remmy?"

"Wisha then, no, surely, sir," said the man, "I dun know what came over me to ask *my* question."

"Well, what's the matter now?

"Come to see you they are, sir."

"Who, man?" was asked in some little alarm.

"The Wren-boys, sir."

"The Wren-boys!"

"Yes, sir, in regard o' Saint Stephen."

"The Wren-boys come to see *me* in regard of Saint Stephen!" was repeated in a slow and bewildered tone.

At the same time the party without, a little impatient at Remmy's delay, recommenced their noisy harmony—

> "*The Wran—the Wran, the king of all birds,*
> *St. Stephen's day was caught in the furze,*
> *Although he's little——*"

The strange disturbance seemed to aggravate the wrath of the secluded tenant of the chamber——"What's all this din, you ruffian?" he said to Remmy in a furious tone.

"Themselves that's singing it, sir."

"What? who are they, sir?"

"The Wran-boys."

"The Wren-boys again! Who are the Wren-boys? what the plague do they come clattering their old pans and kettles here for? What do they want, Remmy?"

"Money I believe, sir, and liquor."

"Money and liquor! From whom, pray?"

"E'then from your honour—sure 'tisn't from the likes o' me they'd be expecten it?"

"Why, are they creditors of ours, Remmy?"

"O not they, sir, one of 'em—sure yourself knows *we* owe no money. But they want a little by-way of a compliment in regard o' Saint Stephen?"

"Saint Stephen! Why, what the mischief, I ask you again, have I to do with Saint Stephen?"

"Nothen, sure, sir, only this being the day, whin all the boys o' the place go about that way, with the wran, the king of all birds, sir, as they say, (bekays wanst when all

the birds wanted to choose a king, an' they said they'd have the bird that would fly highest, the aigle flew higher than any of 'em, till at last whin he couldn't fly an inch higher, a little rogue of a wran that was a-hide under his wing, took a fly above him a piece and was crowned king of the aigle an' all, sir,) tied in the middle o' the holly that way, you see, sir, by the leg that is. An old custom, sir. They hunted it this mornen, and stoned it with black-thorn sticks in regard o' Saint Stephen. That's because he was stoned be the Turks himself, sir, there's a great while there sence. With streamers and ribbins flyen about it. Be the leg they tie it in the middle o' the bush within. An' they sing that song that way for the gentlemen to give them a trate, as it were, 'Get up, ould 'oman, an' give uz a trate,"—or, 'get up—fair ladies—'—or—'we hope your honour,' as the case may be, all in regard o' Saint Stephen. And they dressed out in ribbins, with music an' things. Stoned be the Turks he was, Saint Stephen, long ago. Bad manners to 'em (an' sure where's the good o' wishen 'em what they have before?) wherever they are, for so doen. Iss indeed, sir."

"So I am to understand from you that a number of young men come to demand money from me, because they got up this morning and hunted a little wren, tied it in the middle of a holly bush, and stuck a parcel of ribbons on the boughs. Is that the utmost extent of their claim on me?"

"O then, Lord help uz!" said Remmy, greatly perplexed —"if one was to go to the rights o' the matter, that way, sarrow a call more have they to you, I b'lieve. sir."

"Well, then, let those gentlemen take their departure as soon as they please. They shall seek their reward elsewhere, for it is an exploit which I am incapable of appreciating."

"O sir, sure you wouldn't send them away without any thing, to disgrace us?"

"Go along, sir, and do as you are directed."

"Well, well, to be sure, see what this is," Remmy

O'Lone muttered in great distress, as he paced reluctantly along the hall, revolving in his mind the manner in which he should most palatably announce this disagreeable intelligence to the crowd without. They were preparing to renew the chorus when he opened the massive hall-door, and proceeded to address them. As his master had not permitted him to gratify his auditors in the substantial way, Remmy thought the least he might do, was to take what fusal.

liberties he pleased with the form and language of the re-

"Boys," said he, "Mr. Hamond is in bed, sick, an' he desired me to tell ye that he was very, very sorry intirely that he had nothen to give ye. He desired his compliments, an' he's very sorry intirely."

"I knew he was a main wretch!" exclaimed the wren boy—"He a Cromwaylian—he Bag-an'-Bun! Bag an' baggage! O, 'pon my word, he's a great neger."

"Houl your tongue, I tell you, Terry Lenigan," said Remmy. "Don't anger me, I'd advise you."

"Remmy, would you answer one question," said Terry, "an' we'll be off. Who is it milks Mr. Hamond's cows?"

To understand the point of this query, it is necessary the reader should be informed that, in consequence of Mr. Hamond's allowing no dairy woman a place in his establishment, which was solely composed of Remmy and his old mother, a false and invidious report had been circulated that the office alluded to in the last speech (which in Ireland is looked upon as exclusively womanish and unworthy of the dignity of man,) was fulfilled by no less a personage than the redoubtable Remmy O'Lone himself. This disgraceful charge, though frequently and indignantly rebutted, was the more maliciously persevered in, as it was found to answer its chief object not the less effectively—that of irritating the temper of its subject, and furnishing the spectators with what Hobbes would call a spectacle exceedingly gratifying to their vanity—a man in a state of comically passionate

excitation. It lost nothing of its usual force by its total unexpectedness at the present moment.

Remmy plunged forward toward the speaker, then remained fixed for a few moments in an attitude minative of offence—the consummation of his desires being checked by a rapid and almost involuntary reflection on the little glory he would be likely to reap from an engagement in which the odds would be so awfully against him. Then suddenly recollecting himself, he stood erect putting his little finger knuckle between his lips, and blew a whistle so shrill and so loud, that the echoes of the broken hills which surrounded the castle,—and in the fine phrase of the Spanish poet, stood aloft in their giant stature, ruffling their foreheads against the morning sun,* returned the unwonted sounds in an hundred varied tones. This was not the response, however, which Remmy ambitioned, so much as the yelling of a leash of beagles, who presently made their appearance, though not in time to do any considerable damage amongst the aggressors, who retreated in double quick time, making such a din as no power of language that the writer possesses could possibly convey to the reader.

"I'll not be able to stand this long, mother," said Remmy, as he returned to the kitchen, where old Minny O'Lone was quietly seated by the breakfast-table, making as rapid progress as her toothless jaws would permit her to do, through the reeking mountain of sleek-coated potatoes and virgin-white milk that covered the board. "My master an I'll never agree together, I see that; an' if I once get my character from him, I'd cut my stick to-day before to-morrow, that's what I would See what this is! A decent, well-commended, notable lad, with as much papers in characters in me chest as 'ud be the maken of a grocer if he got it for waste-paper—a lad with as strait an' round a leg," he added, extending one which certainly (notwith-

* ——Este Monte eminente
Que arruga al Sol en seno de su frente.

standing Remmy's wig) justified the commendation—"as ever stood in white cotton on a dickey—and I don't care whose the other is—a leg that never thought 'twould be forced to mount a brogue again any way; here am I now in the flower o' my days, cook, ostler, groom, herdsman, gorsoon, gard'ner, steward, an' all, in this old box pitched up on the top of a hill, and shaking to every blast o' wind like a straw upon the waters—as bad as the Darbyshire stone that me master an' meself seen once in our travels in foreign parts, sarven a man that has such quare ways—disgracen himself aa' all belongen to him. There'll be a holy show made of us with the Wran-boys. I set the dogs after 'em—for——that's more of it, too. Another job they give me, as if I hadn't enough."

The ringing of a bell cut short the train of Remmy's murmurings.

"That's for his tay, to have it ready for him," said he, stirring the fire and arranging the kettle, "if he wasn't so sickly (an' a body doesn't know the time he'll go)—an' there's no sayen what sort of a will he has made, but if Remmy O'Lone isn't high in the sheepskin, Mr. Hamond is not the man he ought to be. Sure he has no rilations, an' if he had itself what are they, only as you may say the casual gifts o' forten, whereas, a good sarvant is a man's own choice, that ought to be esteemed according."

"How do you know will the master ever die?" said the mother.

"Eh?"

"How do you know is it himself that's there at all? When he got the sickness that was goen last summer, by being so mooch in the houses o' the poor people, do you know what I done? I tuk a bit o' the—but it's a sacret—the herb they say that tells for life or death by boiling it in a skillet, and if it turns green, the man recovers, if black, he dies surely—an' I put it down here on the fire about the dead o' night, when ye were all in bed, an' he was just

drappen off in his crisis, despaired of be the doctors, and I looked into the skillet by'n-by, and sure there it was, no change at all in it, only just the same colour it was when I put it down."

"Oh, that's all nonsense—poh! that's ye're shooperstishious," said Remmy, whose travels with his master had taught him to despise the legends of his native soil, at least in outward appearance and in the day time. "If it wasn't himself, do you think he'd be so wild when he heard o' Miss Emily's misforten? Oh, the poor lady! Ah, mother, that was the real lady—Heaven rest her, this day! 'Twas she that had the open hand to the poor servant—an' she'd slip it into your hand as soft as if she didn't feel herself given it into your hand that way, an' she looken another way, or may be smilen at you an' sayen, 'Remmy, I gev you a dale o' throuble this while back;' or, 'Remmy, here's a keepsake for you,' with a voice that would raise the very cockles o' ye'r heart with its sweetness. And such a fine proud step with her for all! An' the way she used to walk along," Remmy continued, standing up and forgetting his half-peeled potato in his enthusiasm, while he imitated the action he described—"springen off the ball of her little foot, and looken out from under the eyebrows as if it was out of the clouds she come. An' to think, mother," he added, standing erect and staring on the old woman, "to think that all that should go for nothing! The match made—the wedden fixed—the day coom a'most all but one—the favours given out—the gloves sent round—the bridecake baked—the dresses both for herself and himself finished off—the music ready—the priest at hand—the frinds *convanient*—and hoop! whisk!" Remmy continued, slapping both hands together with a loud report, and then tossing them up to their furthest extent over his head to express suddenness—"all gone! as you'd puff the down off a clock!* Slap! as if you rubbed your eyes an'

* The seed-bud of a common weed so called

saw the saa where that mountain is overright us. Whack! no more sign o' the whole affair than of a sperrit that 'ud vanish you'd think! She was a high lady in her time—low enough she lies now. The pace an' the light of heaven lies with her where she lies, for ever!"

And having unburthened his heart by this panegyric, Remmy resumed his place and his toil at the breakfast-table.

CHAPTER II.

I know not what the matter is, but I am grown very kind and am friends with you—You have given me that will kill me quickly, but I'll go home and live as long as I can.

—*Beaumont and Fletcher.*

Detesting from our hearts all unnecessary mystery, which is no less repulsive in a narrative, we apprehend, than in the transactions of social life, we shall proceed to lay before the reader, a few events in the life of the proprietor of Castle Hamond, in the course of which, he will find an explanation of the allusions contained in Remmy's last oration.

It will be needful, moreover, that we take the reader for a short time out of Munster, the general scene of action which we have selected for the conduct of these histories; promising him, that as we tread but tenderly on other ground, the period of our absence shall be limited to as brief a space as may suffice to make him comprehend the chain of the story.

There are no classes of beings, either in the social or natural world, so distinctly separated one from the other, that an intermediate species may not be observed, partaking of the nature of both, and generally combining their least tolerable peculiarities. Those amphibious monsters are generally found, in social life, to consist of the vain and the vulgar: and I believe there is no country in the world

where a class of persons may not be observed who stand thus between humble and "respectable" life—drawing the external fopperies and gaudiness of the one over the coarseness of the other, and hanging like the link of an ill-favoured chain between the two diamonds, simplicity and refinement. Disowned by the class to which they would aspire, and disliked by that which they have deserted, these people would lead very miserable lives, if it did not happen providentially enough that they are burthened with no inconvenient quantity of feeling, and find in the gratification of their vanity, a happiness more than commensurate to the mortification which they *ought* to receive from the repulsive scorn of those above, and the insolent reproaches of those below them. In this genus may be classed the long array of coarse faces that one finds astray in Leghorn bonnets—the splay feet in silk stockings—the half-educated pretenders in conversation, who steer a clear course between the natural wit of the lower and the fine taste and acquirement of the higher orders—the shock heads that have discarded the lowly felt, and glisten in beaver—all, in short, that is tawdry, and coarse, and flippant in society.

It does not always happen, nevertheless, that the individuals whom fortune, not choice, has thrown into this class, are totally destitute of sensibility, and when the contrary is the case, the reader (possessing a due proportion himself) may easily imagine how much more acute it is rendered by the absence of sympathy consequent on its very rarity. This was the situation, in early life, of the hero of our tale, and it was rendered still more distressing by the natural disposition of the man, which was so morbidly sensitive, that it would have required much care, and a vigorous exertion of mind in any station, to save him from the perils of disgust and misanthropy.

The nearest relative of his own that Eugene Hamond had been ever acquainted with, was an old man—a second-cousin of his father's—who returned to his native isle

(with a fortune made of sugar and tobacco in the Illinois), just in time to see poor Hugh made an orphan, and to grant the dying request of his father, that he would see the child taken care of—a promise which he made with an ill grace and performed with a worse. This old fellow was one of those selfishly generous beings who confer a favour for their own sakes alone—and while they mingle so much ungracious rudeness with their liberality, as to make it a pain, not a pleasure to the receiver, yet look for as warm and abundant a show of gratitude as if the gift were not entirely a selfish action. A show of gratitude, we say, for as it is a gaudy vanity which prompts the benefit, so an ostentatious gratitude will amply suffice to repay it. The old man possessed not the silent feeling of generosity in himself, and had not faith in the silent gratitude of his young protegé. The shy temper of the latter recoiled from the blazonry of affection which was thus required from him—and moreover felt it wearisome and annoying to be constantly reminded of benefits which had been conferred on him at an age when he was incapable of appreciating the consequences of laying himself under an obligation, and of course could exercise no election in the matter. Old Hamond had been an enthusiast in his youth, and had left home with the hope of procuring in a distant land the means of rendering himself respected and beloved in his own. No person could have set out with kinder or more affectionate intentions—but their performance was fixed for a period too remote (as is, we fear, only too frequently the case with young adventurers); he conceived himself entitled, on the strength of his ultimate designs, to omit all those intermediate and minor attentions to his friends at home, which duty, gratitude, and affection demanded from him.

"It is no matter," he would say to himself, when the post brought him a letter full of gentle murmurings and affectionate reproaches from a mother who loved him well, and whom he loved in turn, taxing him with a long series

of letters unacknowledged, and fondness apparently forgotten—"It is no matter, I am getting on rapidly here. 'Twill be only a few years more, and I'll have a fortune made here and *then* I'll show my mother that she mistakes my character; that it is not for myself only I am toiling—and that she has not been forgotten, as she supposes. I'll return to her with the means of increasing her comfort, and that will be a better proof of my love than a mere string of empty words, which can answer no good purpose but that of putting half-a-crown into the king's pocket. Besides, I will answer this letter at any rate *to-morrow*." And then he would apply himself more vigorously to business than ever—he would overwork his slaves—seek new connexions, and swifter means of profit—new wealth would flow in—his hope would become brighter—his wishes would swell with his prosperity—he would no longer content himself with the prospect of rendering his parents comfortable in their station—he would lift them above it. They would become the envy of the country side. His father should be a gentleman and his mother a lady. He would buy out Mr. Moore's estate (a ruined mortgaged property,) and give it to his father. They should cut the Ryans out of the field, and distance the Heaveners—the most rapidly improving Palatines in the country. In the midst of these day-dreams a letter of fresh complaints would appear like a spectre before his eyes—to pass away and be forgotten in a similar manner. The renewal of those charges, however, could not but disturb him; and while he could not shut up the ears of his heart to the reproaches of his own conscience, he endeavoured to shift his vexation from his own neglect, to what he was pleased to term the importunity of his friends; and making as much account of his intentions, as if they were benefits actually conferred, he began to treat those latter with much ill-temper, as if he were suffering under some considerable injustice. The longer he delayed writing, the more impressed he became with the belief that

some more substantial apology than a mere statement of facts would be required from him, and he had not yet contented himself with the extent of his property. All communication, therefore, shortly ceased between them. In the selfishness of his own heart, he had vilely undervalued the sterling worth of human nature altogether; he considered not how much more precious to the heart of a fond mother would be one token of affection, one word, one remembrance from an absent child, than if he could pour out the wealth of all the nations at her feet.

He did not consider this, neither did it once occur to him that any change could have taken place at home, while time was laying its white hand upon his own head in a foreign clime. He was astonished, therefore, to find, on returning (with a fortune sufficient even to satisfy his own longing) to his native village, that while he had been revolving a fine scheme for the elevation of his parents, death had laid them low in the grave. They had died in want, and left their son no blessing.

What was he now to do with the heap of yellow trash which he had been forty years in amassing? It lay, a dead weight, upon his hands. Mr. Moore, the Ryans, and the Heaveners, the objects of his love and his envy, were alike vanished from the face of the soil—and he turned in disgust and impatience from the crowd of new faces that stared upon him from the haunts of his boyhood. The only one of his old companions that remained was the father of our hero, and *he* tarried no longer than just sufficed to tell him the manner of his parents' death, and to place in his hands the child he was about to leave otherwise utterly destitute.

This little relic of his father's house was not prized by the old man so highly as might have been expected. It was a long time before old Hamond could bring himself to look upon the boy in any more tolerable light than that of a usurper, who had suddenly darted upon him, and snatched

away the prize which he had treasured up for dearer friends. In the process of time, however, the child won somewhat upon his regard; and we have already seen the manner in which his awakened kindness began to expand itself. His still unextinguished vanity, moreover, had a large share in the motives which occasioned Eugene's good fortune. As he could no longer make ladies and gentlemen of his dead friends, he determined to do as much as his fortune would enable him to accomplish in that way, with respect to his protegé. But he took especial care that no benefit was ever conferred, without making the latter as perfectly sensible as words could render him, of its extent and munificence; and while he thus dragged, as it were, from the heart of the latter, a timid and hesitating expression of the ardent gratitude which he felt, he was naturally dissatisfied with the faltering manner of the boy, whose excessive timidity of disposition rendered him very unwilling to enter into a perfect confidence and intimacy with a nature so coarse, so ungentle, and so unlike his own. What we are endeavouring, and very faintly, to convey to the reader in narrative, may, however, be much more clearly laid before him, by transcribing a scene which took place between our hero and his benefactor, on an occasion when the latter formed the resolution of removing to Dublin for a few years—as much (but this he reserved to himself) for the purpose of relieving his own eyes from the sight of objects which were to him all tinged with the gloom of some mournful recollection, as with the intention of completing the education of his young heir and relative.

He had been meditating, during the morning, on the benefit which the latter would receive from the measure he was about to adopt, and had placed the gratification of his own wishes so much out of sight, that he presently persuaded himself that nothing but Eugene's advantage was influencing him in the step: and he was in consequence wrapt into a perfect admiration of his own munificence

when the youth entered the room, his face glowing with exercise, and a small hurly and ball in his hand. As is generally the case with all morose people when they have brought themselves to resolve upon a liberal action, his heart warmed toward the object of it, and he held out his hand with a smile of readier kindness than usual, and beckoned him toward the sofa, where he sat in his long brown great-coat and Leghorn hat, with a Havannah cigar half-burnt in his mouth.

"Come here, Hugh, my lad—give me your hand, sir. Ha!—what have you been at, child? You're like my poor mother in the eyes, I guess, you are."

"Playing goal, sir, I was—with little Remmy O'Lone."

"Remmy O'Lone! Fie, you grovelling little animal, that's no companion for you. Was that what I have been toiling and moiling for these forty years, scraping and saving, up early and late, working and wearing the flesh off my bones, and all for your benefit. Eh? sir?"

A pause.

"To have you spend your time playing goal with Remmy O'Lone! Come here, Hugh. Is there anything you are in want of now?"

"N—o—no! sir," said Hugh, hesitating between his fear of giving offence by a refusal and accepting an unnecessary obligation; for youth as he was, he had already begun to discover the inconveniences of the latter course.

"Because if you do, Hugh, you know you have nothing to do but to command me. What have I all this wealth for, but for your use? What have I been struggling and labouring for during my whole life but for your benefit? And you are welcome to it, Hugh, as welcome as if you were my own child, for you are a good lad, Hugh, you are."

"I declare—I'm greatly obliged to you, uncle——"

"Pah! now, that's what I hate! Do you think 'tis thanks I'm looking for, sir? Come here to me, what do do you think I'm going to do for you now, guess?"

Hugh looked pained and puzzled.

"You are now fifteen years of age—I have expended more money on your edication than was ever spent in the *raising* of any of your family before. I have given more for books and other *notions* for you than would have bought a *bunch* o' niggars. Now I'm going to take you to Dublin to finish your edication, *slick-right-away*."

The blood rushed into Hugh's cheek, and he was about to utter an exclamation of gratitude and delight—but recollecting how he had been checked for doing so the moment before, he was silent.

Old Hamond stared upon him. "Why, you don't seem to like this, Hugh, you don't."

"O yes, sir—I do, indeed—but——"

"But what?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Nothing!—Are these my thanks? No matter. Very well, sir. No, I won't hear anything from you now. Go along to your own room. Very well, Hugh!"

Too delicate to expose to the possibility of a repulse the warm feeling of gratitude which he was conscious of possessing, Eugene left the room to fret and chafe in the solitude of his own chamber—blaming himself for his awkward manner—full of agony at the thought of the cold impression which he left on his uncle's mind—and never once dreaming of questioning a statement which had been constantly dinned into his ear, from the time when first that organ became capable of exercising its function—that his advantage was the *cause* and not the *consequence* of all his uncle's toil and labour. His uncle was not so blind to the distinction, but he had shut his eyes to it a long time, and at length began to believe that it no longer existed.

Scenes, similar in their tone and issue to the above, were almost of daily occurrence during their residence in the metropolis. Had Eugene *felt* towards his benefactor the indifference with which he was constantly charged, he

might have led a pleasant, easy life; but his temper becoming every day more and more morbid and irritable by the recurrance of those annoying demêlés, left him not a moment's peace. Very often, too, he imputed to his uncle an acuteness of feeling equal to his own, and estimating the resentment of the former at finding or believing himself treated with ingratitude, by what his own would be in a similar case, he thus learned to make pity for the old man constitute at least half his misery; a thing that he would not have done had he been able to see that old man's heart. By some means, however, it unfortunately happened that the two relatives never happened to fall into the same state of feeling at the same time. When Eugene would come into his uncle's presence in a morning, after meditating, through a long and feverish night, on the part he had acted in some quarrel the evening before, and forcing himself at length into the conviction that the fault lay on his own side—that his uncle *was*, as he had often declared himself to be, the best possible uncle that nephew ever had; when he entered the room, we say, in the morning, with a penitent face, and heart anxious to unburthen itself at the feet of his benefactor, he would be surprised by some dry, every-day observation; or perhaps some jest, which showed him that the affair which lay so heavily upon his mind, and heated and broke his slumbers, was as totally forgotten by the other, as if they had parted the night before the best friends in the world. The next morning, perhaps, on the contrary, when he would enter the breakfast-parlour with a light heart and merry eye, overflowing with love for his uncle and for all the world, he would find the former cold, distant, and reserved—they would join hands with a silent stare—and Eugene would find himself compelled to eat his bread once more in the bitterness of dependence. The misunderstanding was thus prolonged to agony.

A heavy, dreary chain had been wound about the young

man's spirit, which he toiled and toiled to rend asunder, but found too potent for his strength. Frequently, in the ardour of his indignant heart, when he approached that age at which the thirst of independence begins to warm in a young man's breast, the idea of flinging himself abroad upon the world, and taking his fortunes boldly and manfully upon his own unshackled hands, would dart across his mind, and he would catch at it with all the elastic readiness of youthful hope, when the deep and real ingratitude of the step, all his uncle's kindness towards him, the actual practical benefits he had conferred upon him, would rush in a mass before his eyes, and make him blush to think that he had for an instant placed his merely abstracted and, perhaps, peculiar feelings and distresses in opposition to them. Besides, his benefactor was now declining fast into that age when the minute attention of a really affectionate friend is most required; and even if Eugene could be base enough to leave him to meet death in loneliness and sorrow, he could not shake off the load of obligations which had already been cast upon him.

"Heaven, that sees my heart," he would frequently exclaim, pausing and extending his arms, as he paced his chamber alone in agony and irresolution, "sees that it is not meanness that binds me to this state of vile dependence. But I am caught and spell-bound. The trap was laid for my heart before it had ever beat; and until I can unravel the chain of past events and undo all that has been done, I must content myself with this hideous slavery. My dependence is my fate—it is the will of heaven, immutable and irresistible, as much as my orphanage was, and I may no more make my benefactor *not* my benefactor now than I can call up my dead parents from their graves. Oh, would to Heaven I could have exercised a choice at the time when he first meditated the first favour he conferred upon me. What a load of wretchedness would have been spared us both!"

Neither were Eugene's distresses so entirely fanciful or peculiar as he was willing to admit. His uncle, in a rank above that in which he was born, had totally miscalculated, in his simple ignorance, the mere common expenses of the mode of life in which he had placed his nephew. He had *added up* with a slate and pencil the sums which it would be necessary to pay for schooling, clothing, and absolute necessaries, and imagined that the whole affair was settled when he laid apart an annual sum for those purposes. But Eugene soon found that there was much more required to enable him to appear on an equality with his new companions. A thousand nameless occasions for expense, which his mechanical relative could not anticipate nor even understand, occurred every day; and while old Hamond was constantly murmuring at home at the drain which Eugene's gentlemanly life was opening upon his wealth, the latter found himself deserted, shunned, *cut* (that is the best word for the occasion) by all the young men into whose society he was thrown, in consequence of his inability to mingle in and forward their various schemes of recreation and amusement in hours of leisure. He could better brook, however, to glide in the downcast solitariness of conscious poverty through the crowds of gay and thoughtless faces that peopled this (to him) novel world, than to give his uncle occasion for additional censures—it never once occurring to him that this habit of censuring was the joy of the old man's life, and that, in truth, nothing could give him greater pleasure than to have Eugene acknowledge his dependence by applying to him for assistance—as nothing was more calculated to sour his disposition than finding himself thus compelled, as it were, to give everything from himself, as though it were a matter of course, and not favour or generosity.

Eugene had, however, at length an opportunity of placing his character in its proper light before the eyes of his uncle. It was one of the leading foibles (perhaps, in this

instance, we should more correctly say, peculiarities) of the latter to entertain a most unbounded horror and detestation of law, in whatever shape or form it was presented to his eyes—a feeling which has, of late, become almost national in certain parts of Ireland. This weakness was in him carried to so extravagant a length that, during his residence in the Illinois, being menaced with an action by a former partner of his own (a prodigal, worthless wretch, from whom he had separated himself with much difficulty and with great loss), on the ground of an unequal division of property at the dissolution of partnership, and a consequent breach of contract, he had bought him off at a great price, without once inquiring into the law of the case—without venturing within eyeshot of an attorney, a race of beings whom he looked upon as analogous in the American towns to the rattle-snakes in their woods, and avoided with as much caution. His excessive timidity on this head was frequently almost ludicrous. Although he was, on all ordinary occasions, an active, stirring, bustling man, with as much vigour, strength of understanding, and foresight as might constitute the average proportion of those qualities among men of business in a similar rank of life, he seemed, when once placed even by his fears alone within the danger of a lawsuit, though on never so trivial an occasion, to be suddenly deserted by all his faculties; he would become listless and silent in the midst of his daily occupations—his heart failed him—his spirit flagged and sunk—he would mope about his offices like a spectre—giving absent answers—speaking in a soft, whining tone, and staring about him in solitary helplessness of aspect. There was something comically pathetic in all his conduct on these occasions, which, while it made his best lovers smile in their own despite, compelled his very slaves, who were accustomed to his usual severity of tone and gesture, to look upon him with an emotion of pity. The profligate fellow of whom we spake was not long in finding out the

undefended side of his partner's character, and made, as we have said, his own uses of the discovery.

Old Hammond was thus found, one evening, by his nephew, who had just returned from a solitary excursion to Howth, reclining, as usual, with one leg stretched along the sofa; a small rose-wood table drawn close to him, on which were a cigar, a lighted candle, a glass of brandy-punch but little diminished, and an open letter. The old man was leaning back in his seat with an expression of piteous indecision on his features—a heavy perspiration upon his brow—his broad-leafed Leghorn hat pushed back upon his crown, and his loose coat wrapped more closely than usual about his person.

"Are you ill, uncle?" was Eugene's first question as he entered the room, a little startled by the sudden metamorphosis in the appearance of the latter.

"Ha! Hugh, are you there? Come here. Oh, we're ruined, Hugh—horse and foot we are."

"What's the matter, sir?"

"Read that. O dear, Hugh—what'll we do at all? Is there no part o' the world safe?"

Hugh took up the letter and read as follows.

"Mr. Hamond, Sir,

"This comes to inform you that I conceive myself severely ill used by your conduct in not completing our original contract, whereby I was entitled, on dissolution of partnership, to the punch of niggers that were worked eastward of the snarl of stones, on the 'bacco plantation; not one of the same, each estimated at three hundred dollars, moderate computation, being delivered, to my loss according. Wherefore, take notice, that unless present compensation be made as above, I shall take the steps necessary for the recovery of my own."

"Well, sir," said Hugh, "is this really contained in your contract, as one of the articles?"

"It was, Hugh; but, you see, the fellow and I afterward agreed that I should keep the bunch of niggers, in lieu of their value in sugar, which he sold and appropriated to his own use—and we did so without touching the contract; and now he insists that it has not been fulfilled, though I have paid the money twice over."

"Well, sir! what then have you to do, but to tell him to go about his business?"

"Ay, Hugh, but he'd commence an action at once, and ruin us."

"Without ground! Ruin himself he might, sir; but what have you to fear from an action brought by a man who has no claim?"

"Ah, Hugh, my lad, you are young in these matters; I tell you, the law is such a thing, that he'd make it out—he'd find a better claim to all I have, by only consulting a few lawyers, than I have myself. We'll be ruin'd, that's the fact of it."

"Then take an opinion yourself, sir."

"Take an opinion! Consult an attorney! Let a lawyer come within my doors! Think o' something else, Hugh, do."

"Let us see how the case stands ourselves, then. Was not the contract made in America, sir?"

"Ah, Hugh; but this fellow had his establishment here, so that both houses were concerned in some way—I can't understand—but I know the affair can be decided here; and as everything I have is in debentures, all but Castle Hamond, he can lay his hand upon the whole as readily as I can lift this tumbler. O Hugh!"

"Stay, sir," said Eugene, "I will read a little on the matter for you."

He took down a volume of Blackstone, and opened at the Rights of Things. It was amusing to observe the utter helplessness, terror, and perplexity which became every minute more evident on the old man's face as his

nephew plunged more deeply into the wilderness of legal technicalities; the distinctions between gifts and grants—a *chose* in action and a *chose* in possession—conventions—obligations *ex contractu* and *quasi ex contractu*—chattles real and personal—considerations *do ut des; facio ut facias; facio ut des;* and *do ut facis;*—*nuda pacta*—contracts executed, executory, express, implied, of sale, exchange, bailment, hiring, and debt; *testes*, trusts, hand-sales, &c., &c.

"Shut the book! shut the book!" he at length exclaimed, rising from the sofa and pacing up and down the room in great distress—"No, Hugh; I'll tell you how I'll manage it. That's the plainest bit of law I ever heard, that there about *A* and *B* and the flock of sheep. Suppose my debentures the flock of sheep, I myself *A*, and you *B*—eh, Hugh? I'll make the whole over by gift to you, and so there's an end to all law, at once."

He did so—and never lifted up his head afterward. The sole pleasure of his life, that of constantly reminding his nephew of his dependence, was no longer in his power to exercise. Hugh was now his own master, and his threats and murmurings were no longer anything more than an empty sound.

The common lot of all old uncles, as well as fathers, at length fell to the hands of Mr. Hamond. After having satisfied himself that there was no law or flaw from *Nepos* down to *Trinepotis Pronepos*, by which Eugene's claim to the debentures could be questioned, he yielded to the secret conviction, which had been long creeping into his heart, that his days were numbered, and prepared to balance the great account in such wise as he might.

"It is no use, Hugh," said he, one morning after the priest had left the sick room, and while the young man was mingling a draught by his bed-side, "I shall die now, slick-right-away. I have a long score to add up, but the Almighty that measures my time will, I hope, look merci-

fully on the use that is made of it. Hugh, my boy, never forget a good friend while you live—don't, Hugh—never prefer a great good intention to a little good action. If a poor friend wants a frieze coat, don't let him wait in his nakedness till you can give him a cloak o' Manchester broad-cloth; if he cry to you for a crust o' bread, don't bid him nurse hunger until you can boil him a terrapin. I'm dying very uneasy, Hugh. Bury me near my father and mother, and give the undertaking to my old acquaintance Dillon, since I have nothing else to leave him of my own."

"Have you not, uncle?" said Eugene, stooping over the bed, and placing on the counterpane the deed of gift, which had been in his keeping—"This parchment has served its purposes! I now restore it to you, and with it take my heart's thanks for all your kindness to me."

"Eh, Hugh?"

"O my dear uncle, I may now at least talk freely, for my heart cannot be checked any longer by the suspicion of self-interest. My father and my friend, I thank you for your care, your love, and your attention—the days that you have spent in laying plans for my advantage—the nights during which you have taken my dead mother's place by my bed-side—for all that you have done for me, take my heart's gratitude. If ever I looked a look, or spoke a word to displease you, I disown the eyes and lips that gave the offence; those only are mine that are now pouring out at your feet their tears and prayers for your forgiveness."

Old Hamond was not the less pleased at this burst of enthusiasm from his young friend, because it was totally unexpected. He raised himself with difficulty in the bed, placed one hand over his eyes, as if to strengthen and concentrate the feeble and wavering power of vision which remained to them, while he reached the other to his nephew, gazing, with as much steadiness as he could command, on the glowing, open, upturned face of the young man. He

dropped the deed on the floor, retained Eugene's hand, which he pressed once or twice, saying, "You are a good lad, Hugh; you are indeed. God be with you, boy; he will, I am sure."

In less than a fortnight after this interview, in which the misunderstanding of a whole life had been cleared up so happily and so late, Eugene Hamond fulfilled his benefactor's last wishes, by laying him beside his parents in the churchyard of his native village.

We have now seen the many circumstances of Eugene's early life which contributed to foster and irritate the original malady of his disposition—his low birth, his early orphanage, his bruised and shattered pride, his suspected affection, his unappreciated gratitude, and his gnawing, because specious and gilded poverty. Will the reader deem it worth his while to see how such a nature, sensitive even to a perfectly morbid acuteness of perception, fared in its first contact with the contingencies of a rank superior to his own? following him into that rank, however, rather in pursuance of his individual history, than with the view of furnishing any new information respecting it.

CHAPTER III.

Clerimont.—Boy, marshal him.
Boy.—With a truncheon, sir?
Clerimont.—Away, I beseech you. I'll make him tell us his pedigree, now. *Ben Jonson.*

WHAT Irish fashionable life was at the period when Hamond first found himself in possession of his uncle's property (soon after the Union,) is no longer a question to be solved by the Irish novelist. Few persons, we apprehend, will open these volumes who have not already been made aware of all its varieties, by a writer who was the first to put the

sickle into the burthened field of Irish manners; in whose footsteps we follow, like Chaucer's gleaner, at a long interval, with fearful and hesitating pace, casting our eyes around to gather in the scattered ears which remain after the richness of her harvest.

One observation, however, we understand, may be added to what Maria Edgeworth has already recorded of the circle of Irish fashion—that, although it is necessarily composed of far inferior materials to that of the exclusives in the sister kingdom, it is a matter of lesser difficulty for wealth to pay its way into the region in the latter than the former, pride—mere family pride, is one of the grand national foibles which yet remain unshaken by the inroads of modern intelligence; and no internal or external wealth with which a man may be gifted in his own person, will compensate for the mental or corporeal poverty of his ancestors. This feeling (which is not without its uses when confined within rational limits,) is frequently carried beyond the bounds of absurdity, and exercises an influence among all classes, from the gaudy mob of cold starers in a castle drawing-room, to the group of frieze-coated "follyers," or clansmen, who talk over the deeds of their ancestry by a cabin fire-side. Dazzled and delighted as he was on his first introduction to a rank in which he found those refined feelings and delicate miseries of common occurrence, which in that which he had left were not understood, or laughed at as affectation, or (worse than all) pitied, and stigmatized by the odious title of *nervous irritability*—delighted, we repeat, as he was at first sight of a mode of life so congenial to his heart, he soon found in the original sin of his low birth, an occasion of deeper and more real suffering than any which he had yet endured. In order to illustrate some of the observations which we have made, perhaps the reader will allow us to shift the scene for a few moments, and omitting a detail of the minor occurrences which filled up the time of Eugene for some months after his benefactor's death, introduce our-

selves at once into the drawing-room of a family from whom we may learn something of his fortunes.

It was an extensive, elegantly furnished apartment, indicating rank as well as fashion and wealth. A work-table, tastefully littered with scraps of pic-nic needle-work, not substantial enough to incur the suspicion of utility—just sufficed by contrast to temper and modify the general air of leisure and luxury which pervaded the room, and to redeem from the imputation of absolute idleness, two very young ladies, whose soft white fingers escaping from the confinement of a half-handed jean glove, were wandering in busy idleness among sections of frills, laces, &c., while the fair companions, relieved from the observation of other eyes and ears, were coming over the secrets of their girlish hearts in amiable confidence. One of them was a *blonde* of a quite sedate carriage, almost treading on the skirts of lethargy. The other, a finely formed girl, with full black eyes, hair cut short and clustering all round the head (a fashion not yet gone out of use,) a forehead on which the seal of a noble house was as distinctly set, as if the arms had been emblazoned upon it; and features which even in silence seemed to move in restless sympathy with the animation of a restless spirit. On the cover of her ivory work-box the name "EMILY BURY," was prettily inlaid, and a morocco-bound prayer-book, near her companion, showed the words —"MARTHA O'BRIEN," impressed in gold letters upon the cover.

"Well, Martha, you are a better archer than I, after all," said the dark-eyed girl; "here, while I have been toying about the target with a hundred strings looped upon my bow, you with your single one have shot the shaft and hit the very centre of the mark. So I must be your bride-maid!"

"You must not envy me, Emily."

"Envy you, you silly girl!—Hand me those scissors, please. I pity you. You have just done like a child that

swallows its sugar-plum at a mouthful, and then cries to find it gone. The women ought to send you to Coventry, for giving up the sex's privilege. Do you think we were made only to drop like ripe peaches into a man's mouth, as he lies lazily in our shade, gaping his admiration?—to be crunched into a sober wife at the very first word! Don't stare so, child—there's nobody listening to us."

"That's well at any rate. I must tell you a secret, Emily. Your beaux all find your pride intolerable. You are getting the name of a coquette."

"Am I?—I'm glad of it. The wretches! They would deny us even that brief day of sovereignty—that little holiday between the drudgery of obedience to parents and obedience to husbands. Ah, Martha, you will say that I am a wise girl before you have worn caps with ears for many months."

"I wish Mr. O'Neil heard you."

"O! he'd be delighted, He's a true Irishman. He likes a proud woman, even though her contempt should fall heaviest upon himself. There never was a man who lived so entirely upon the possession of his friends as Mr. O'Neil. He is a poor man himself, he admits, but then he is the poorest of his own family—he is an uninformed blockhead, he will allow you, but then he has such 'bright' people, relations of his—he does not deny that he is a worthless, dissipated wretch, but all the rest of his family are so respectable and so highminded. In fact, you would think, to hear him speak, that he was proud of being the scrape-grace of his own house—the only black sheep in the fair flock of the white-fleeced O'Neil's."

"Well, there is another young gentleman, Eugene Hamond—

"*Quere*, gentleman—"

"There again, Emily! You wonder that I should charge you with injustice—A blush?—Fie! you malicious creature! to hit me on the top of the finger with that heavy scissors!

But seriously, Emily, you use poor Hamond very cruelly. If he heard you say such a cutting thing as that last, I know but little of the gentleman, or you would *see* but little of him afterward."

"Oh, indeed, he's perfectly welcome to do what he pleases. I don't think him so vulnerable, however. I will try him a good deal farther yet. You would not suppose that underneath all that amiable timidity and embarrassment which makes him stammer in his speech—look pale and vexed—answer with a quivering lip to my common-place questions—start at my least motion—seem absent—and forget to turn my music leaves and praise my singing (for true love is scrupulous)—beneath all this, I say, you wouldn't think that I have discovered one of the proudest and most violent natures that ever made a bad husband. At the last Tabinet ball, he had got me into a corner, and grew all on a sudden so pathetically eloquent that I—I was about to give some queer answer, when young Lord E—— passed us, and bowed to me. I smiled of course, and turning again to Hamond, got such a look! 'Pon my honour, I'm sure I heard his teeth chattering! O ho! my gentleman, thought I, your humble servant. You will wait for my answer until I have taught you something first, or learned more of you myself."

"But how long do you intend to make this game last, Emily?"

"Till I find myself a lover, Martha; when the pastime tires me, I may perhaps run to a corner, and be checkmated quietly. But I never will, like you, let my opponent get a scholar's mate before I make three moves."

"Well, there may be danger still in all this cleverness. What if your adversary should give up the contest in despair? There are no forfeited stakes to comfort you."

"Psha! the worst he can do would be to make it a drawn game. Besides, are there not plenty of people who would be happy to take up the conqueror?"

"But would the conqueror be happy to take up them?"

"No insinuations, pray. I may punish you as I have done before. But really, Martha, I have no pride, upon my honour; and the little secret I told you about Eugene the other day, might show you I have not."

"You needn't blush so, Emily. Do you suppose I actually suspect you of such folly? I merely wished to warn you of the consequences of seeming to be influenced by it. And, once again, mark my words for it, Eugene Hamond will not bear any goading on the conscious side."

"We'll try him a little, however; you don't know him so well as you think. Was he not greatly improved by his trip to the country?"

"He does look very well. He's one of the handsomest young men I know, really. His hair is beautiful—"

"And his eyes—"

"And such white regular teeth!—What he'd give to be listening to us now!"

"Here, Martha, you must finish your lace yourself. I'll work no more—I must practise. Did I show you the last song Hamond gave me?" And removing the green covering from a magnificent harp which stood near the window, she suffered it to rest against her shoulder, while she ran over the prelude of a simple Irish air, previous to accompanying herself in the melody of which she had spoken. Its subject was the imaginary lament of a young Canadian emigrant over the grave of his young wife.—

I.

The tie is broke, my Irish girl
That bound thee here to me,
My heart has lost its single pearl—
And thine at last is free—
Dead as the earth that wraps thy clay,
Dead as the stone above thee—
Cold as this heart that breaks to say
It never more can love thee.

II.

I press thee to my aching breast—
No blush comes o'er thy brow—
Those gentle arms that once caress'd,
Fall round me deadly now.
The smiles of love no longer part
Those dead blue lips of thine;
I lay my hand upon thine heart—
'Tis cold, at last, to mine.

III.

Were we beneath our native heaven
Within our native land,
A fairer grave to thee were given,
Than this wild bed of sand.
But thou wert single in thy faith
And single in thy worth,
And thou should'st die a lonely death,
And lie in lonely earth.

IV.

Then lay thee down and take thy rest,
My last—last look is given—
The earth is smooth above *thy* breast,
And mine is yet unriven!
No mass—no parting rosary—
My perished love can have—
But a husband's sighs embalm her corse,
A husband's tears her grave.

A soft hesitating knock at the hall-door startled the fair minstrel, who blushed, and fetched her breath while she half rose from the silk-cushioned stool.

"'Tis his knock, indeed," said the fairer of the ladies. "His knock always says, '*Let me in, if you please*,' as plainly as O'Neil's says, 'Let me in.' 'Tis the most modest sound that was ever extracted from mere *brass*, decidedly."

"The vain fellow musn't hear me singing *his* song," said Emily, hastily turning over the leaves of her music—"What's this? Oh, a little piece of O'Neil's nonsense; that will just do—I'll vex him a little." And running a lively prelude over the strings of the instrument, she com-

menced an air of a very different character—in a tone of merriment not unmingled, however, with a certain degree of palpitation and embarrassment.

I.

When love in a young heart his dwelling has taken,
And pines on the white cheek, and burns in the veins,
Say how can the reign of the tyrant be shaken—
By absence? by poverty? sickness? or chains?

II.

No—these have been tried, and the tempted has come,
Unmoved through the changes of grief and distress—
But if you would send him at once to the tomb,
You must poison his hope with a dose of—success.

"Admirable! Excellent!" exclaimed a voice outside the door, which, opening at the same instant, gave to the view of the surprised and (so far as one was concerned) disappointed ladies, the gay and rakish person of the author of the last song. He made a bow to Miss O'Brien, a low bow to Miss Bury, and seemed determined, as it was a rare occurrence in his life to receive a compliment, particularly from a lady, to entertain it with all the solemnity and importance of manner which became the occasion. "Miss Bury's execution is killing, isn't it?" he went on addressing himself with a pick-pocket smile to Miss O'Brien—

"Such as orly her musical tongue
Could give to such numbers as mine."

"'Pon my word, Mr. O'Neil, my conscience won't permit me to let you remain in error. I assure you—I mistook your knock—"

"Now, do you hear this, Miss O'Brien?" said Mr. O'Neil, interrupting her, "here's a poor fellow that hasn't a civil word thrown to him by anybody once in a year—and—well!—well!—it reminds me of what an ancestor of mine, Sir Maurice O'Neil, said to Lord ——"

"O you told us that before," said Miss Bury.

"There's more of it! Well, whose knock did you take it for?"

"Mr. Hamond's," said Miss O'Brien.

"What Hamond? Any thing to the Hamonds of Loughrore? They're the only decent Hamonds I know. A grand-uncle of theirs, old David Hamond, was married to one of the O'Learys of Morne—very good family—I recollect my grandmother saying—"

"He is no relative of theirs."

"Who then?"

"You might have seen him at the Castle."

"Eh? what?—the young nabob? Oh, cut him by all means—he's one of the rabble—mechanic. He's only fit company for the tagrag and bobtail of the gentry, fellows like myself, who are the disgrace of their family. *I* might take up with such a fellow for an evening, because he had money and I had none; but I would not like that any of the wealthy members of my family should tolerate him. Enough for such a vagabond as myself to be seen in such company."

"Oh you speak too hardly of yourself, Mr. O'Neil; we all know that your family is one of the best in Ireland."

"My dear ma'am, surely I know it is—and that's the reason I speak. Why, bless you, Miss Bury, *I* have relations that wouldn't know me in the street! Simple as I sit here, there's not one o' my family that wouldn't be ashamed to be seen speaking to me in any public place. There are few besides me have that to say. We were eighteen or twenty of us, at my cousin Harry's in Kerry some months since, and, I protest to you, without any bragging, boasting, or vain-glory, I was the shabbiest and the poorest of the company. Would you believe that now?"

"I could hardly believe that you take occasion for vanity out of such a circumstance."

"Vanity! my dear!—it's my pride and glory; and why

not? Arn't my relations my own family? Supposing that I am at all respectable in my own person, which I grieve to say is a very doubtful case, even to those that know little of me, isn't it a great thing for me to say that there is none of my name below me? If a man deserves any additional respect on account of his family, surely the higher they are above himself the greater his accession of honour? What credit could I receive from a fellow who was below me? Ay, you laugh—as much as to say, that would be a precious lad—but doesn't it make out my point? I felt more proud the other day when my uncle Richard *cut* me at the Castle than if I had got a dukedom."

"There's the true Sosia, Emily," said Miss O'Brien, as another pattering summons, still more gentle and insinuating than that which was used by Mr. O'Neil, *en ruse*, was heard to echo through the spacious hall.

Presently after, a rich, though rather languid voice, heard in parley with the servant, proved Miss O'Brien's second conjecture right. It was Eugene Hamond. He was shown up.

The ladies received him kindly, but formally. Mr. O'Neil stood as straight as if a poker were substituted for his spine. It was laughable enough to observe the air of cold repressing pride with which this man, who confessed himself worthless in every respect, and was destitute alike of mental as of corporeal advantages, stood up to receive the accomplished, elegant, and unassuming plebeian who now stood before him. Eugene did not heed, nor scarcely observe this—but the deportment of the ladies touched him more nearly. In order to make the reader perfectly enter into his feelings on the occasion, we shall shortly explain the relative position in which both parties were placed.

Eugene Hamond's determination to alter his station in life, and endeavour to naturalise himself in a rank above his own, had not been hastily considered, or resolved upon from no better impulse than that of an idle vanity. Naturally

gifted with a quick eye, and ready apprehension of the peculiar tone of any grade of society into which he happened to be thrown, he required but a very brief acquaintance with the world, to enable him to discover all the difficulties and mortifications he would have to encounter in the undertaking, and he weighed those long and seriously against the advantages which he proposed to himself from the change.

"I admit," he said within himself, as he mused by his afternoon fire, over the kindness and the slights which he had met with in the course of the morning—"I admit that for the interests of society in general, and for those of morality, and of religion itself, it would be much better that all men should remain in that rank in which they were born, or at least that nothing less than a development of capabilities, absolutely wonderful, should entitle them to seek a place above their fathers. If distinctions of rank are in any degree useful or commendable, it is necessary they should be maintained even to exclusion, unless in a very few instances, when the applicant for admission brings an ample equivalent in some one great and beneficial quality to the fortuitous superiority of those whose acquaintance he cultivates. I admit all this. But the case *is* otherwise—that system of absolute and unrelenting exclusion is not maintained, and the question is, whether my case is not peculiar enough to justify me in seeking for an additional infraction. My poor friends must not be my companions—that is clear. The accident of my infancy—my disposition—my education—habits—all have conspired to place a wall between me and the humble life from which I sprung, which I cannot, and would not, if I could, overleap. Circumstances have fitted me for another station, and that station is left open to me. It is true that I shall meet, as I have met, many a cold repulse in the attempt, but there are, likewise, many over-balancing delights. Those smiles, so ready, so sweet, so winning, so

hearted, or seeming hearted (and *that* for me, whose chief wish is to steer clear of the asperities of life, would answer almost as well as the sincerity itself) so courteous, and so kind—their brilliant trifling and refined pleasantry—are these nothing to the favoured and initiated? I will make the trial at all events; and if I fail—if the cold eyes and staring, unmoved faces that glance like horrid spectres upon the path of the young and unacknowledged fashionist should multiply upon mine, why then, farewell happiness and high life, and welcome once again my lowly cot and homely Munster village!"

He did make the trial; and he soon found that the difficulties which he had anticipated were not so fleeting nor so easily surmounted as he thought they might be. The encouragement which he met with was much more than sufficient to have established a blunter and less vulnerable nature in perfect peace in the new region; but Hamond's was one which would make no exertion for itself, while it took fire at the slightest act of neglect from others. He seemed to expect that all should agree to drag him forward in spite of himself, and consequently made very little account of condescensions, which were estimated at a high value by those who conferred them. A hankering consciousness clung about his manner and his conversation, even in his intercourse with those families who were best disposed to receive him as an equal; and it was scarcely to be expected, that while he seemed bent upon carrying the recollection of his low origin always about him, other people should endeavour to forget it for him. Besides, it was not very agreeable to his new friends to find that they must always speak under a restraint in his presence—that they could hardly venture on a jest, or a sly speech, whatever were the subject of it, without finding Mr. Hamond's spirit up in arms to discover whether there were any offence intended towards him. He began to feel the consequences of his suspicious and sensitive temper—people shunned him

—some gently, some promptly and without apology, some in pure pity, some with marked contempt, and some in apprehension. Then the suspicion of the truth broke upon him; he saw others of far inferior pretensions to himself, by a little assurance of manner and an indifference to the flesh-wounds of neglect and accidental coldness, succeed in fastening themselves upon the fair eminence, on the crumbling and uncertain brink of which he was yet toiling, in the anxiety of hope and fear; and he made an exertion to imitate their example, and to assume an easy callousness of heart, until, at least, his hold should be made permanent and secure. But he miscalculated his capabilities most egregiously. A more hideous and painful spectacle, perhaps, cannot be met with in the every-day occurrences of society than that of a person of incorrigible timidity and reserve, assuming, or attempting to assume, by absolute violence, the appearance of perfect ease and unconscious openness. If Hamond's gentle embarrassment and absence of manner rendered him a burthen to his companions before —his new demeanour—his strange familiarity—his queer embarrassed laugh—his ill-timed joke that made everybody look serious, and his intrusive dogmatism of remark, absolutely astonished, frightened, and disgusted them. Having once convinced himself of the expediency of doing violence to his own feelings, he knew not where to stop, and on passing the boundary which his own heart prescribed to him, he trampled without discrimination, and, indeed, in absolute ignorance, upon those which custom and decency had marked out for his observance.

He was once more compelled to retire in disgrace into his natural self; and almost began to entertain thoughts of quitting the field in despair for ever, when a new and strange accident—strange to him, though of very usual occurrence in the history of the human heart—prevented or delayed his retreat. A titled beauty had proudly declined the honour of dancing with him at a fashionable party,

and he was silently stealing through the company, with the intention of getting everything ready for his departure for home on the next morning—when, happening to cast a hurried glance aside, he perceived, in the aperture between the conchoid of a gentleman's nose and the rosy rotundity of a marchioness's cheek—a soft black eye, in the distance, directed full upon him, with an expression of the tenderest interest his poor forlorn heart had ever experienced since it had been cast upon the busy wilderness of fashion. There never was an eye—not in Ireland; no, not even in Munster, nor in bright-eyed Limerick itself—that did its owner yeoman's service like that one. It made as swift work of Eugene's heart as (the reader will pardon our sacrificing elegance to strength)—as a pavier's rammer might have done. It was an eye that had been following Hamond in silence throughout the evening with a kinder closeness of observation than mere commiseration might suggest; and was now, at the particular moment when it came in direct contact of intelligence with his own, filled up with the gentlest concern. On inquiry, Hamond discovered that it was the property of a lady of high birth, and (of course) fine accomplishments; her name that of the fair songstress to whom we have lately introduced our readers.

From this moment the whole object of Hamond's life was changed. He no longer courted the patronage nor heeded the neglect of fashion—and only stole quietly through its bye ways to secure himself a place at the side of her who now appeared to him to constitute its sole attraction and adornment.

"I was mistaken in it," he said, in his distaste and impatience; "this proud world is not made for me, nor I for it. I will return to the condition from which I was taken, and divest myself as speedily as possible of those unhealthy luxuriances of feeling, which my poor uncle, in endeavouring to make a forced plant of me, little calculated on pro-

ducing. But before I return to the ways of plain and honest nature, I will endeavour to pluck out of this rank and unweeded garden, *that* single rose for the decoration of my humble hearth."

That little rose, however, happened to be a great deal more thorny than he apprehended. Although he was not long in ascertaining that he had made a progress in the good opinion of Miss Bury, which might have satisfied even the voracious craving of a sensitive love like his, yet there were many annoyances equally disagreeable to both parties, which mingled in the delicacies of their intimacy, and retarded that perfect union of spirit which is ever necessary to the gratification of a heart that is at all dainty in its affections. Emily had betrayed some lack of self-knowledge, when she declared to her friend Martha, that she had *no* pride. She had not enough to enable her to master her passion for her plebeian lover—but she had quite enough to feel annoyed and humiliated by the slights which were continually thrown on him and in her presence. On these occasions, when Eugene attempted to resume the conversation which had been so disagreeably interrupted, he would find Miss Bury a little reserved and lukewarm, and could sometimes trace the shadow of an inward fretting upon her brow. His own pride took fire at this, and frequent and mutual embarrassment was the result. At length, grown absolutely weary of the gauze-paper miseries and difficulties of their flickering acquaintance, Hamond manfully made up his spirit to the resolution of dissevering or uniting their fortunes for ever.

It was with this intention he now sought an interview with her at the house of her guardian—Martha O'Brien's father. The settled determination of his purpose had suddenly quelled all the protracted turbulence of the many impulses on which his peace had been tempest tost for the last year, and he entered the room with a composure of eye, a steadiness of frame, and a natural elegance of address, which

surprised his quick-eyed friends, and puzzled himself not a little. He thought it strange that he should thus, without an effort acquire in a moment what he had been many months toiling to accomplish in vain; and at the moment, too, when he had resigned himself to the belief that he never should attain it.

After a few unmeaning observations on the popular topics of the day—the general mourning for Lord Nelson—the last Castle drawing-room—and other matters, Miss O'Brien, acting from the impulse of a strong feeling, proposed a turn in the garden to Mr. O'Neil, who had done nothing but sit upright and stare at Hamond's Hessian boots (Wellingtons were yet slumbering in the womb of time) and utter a cold "Ha!" whenever the latter directed himself particularly towards his side of the room. The genealogist obeyed the lady's summons, and bowing to Miss Bury, brushed unceremoniously by the plebeian, and left the apartment.

CHAPTER IV

He was a wight of high renowne,
And thou art but of low degree—
'Tis pride that puts this countrye downe—
Man, take thine old cloake about thee.

Percy's Relics.

"*That*," said Hamond, leaning over the back of his chair, and seeming to speak half in soliloquy, as he remained with his eyes fixed on the door—"that is one of the peculiarities—the invulnerable privileges of this polished world, which make it so miserable to me—that *finery* of insult which makes resentment appear ridiculous, and yet does not leave the insulted free from the responsibility of meanness, if he should remain quiescent. You look fretted, Miss Bury," he added gently, but firmly, "at my humiliation, but I shall

not need your commiseration long. I am about to leave Dublin."

"Leave us, Mr. Hamond!" said Emily, taken by surprise.

"Leave *Dublin*, I said," resumed Hamond.

"For any considerable time?"

"Yes."

There was an embarrassed pause of a few moments, during which, Hamond seemed to experience a relapse into his natural timidity. At length, mastering himself by a moment's reflection on the urgency of the occasion, he said:—

"If you think, Miss Bury, that we are not likely to be interrupted, I have something *very* particular to say to you."

Emily was, as we have before said, very young, and though she frequently listened without much emotion to the fashionable rhapsodies of those who thought it fashionable to be her admirers, yet this was the first time that she had been menaced with a methodical declaration: and from one, too, so tender, so delicate, and so sincere. She felt all the awfulness of the occasion. Her colour changed rapidly, and there was a troubled consciousness in her laugh, as she said, in assumed levity—

"No tragedy now, Mr. Hamond, let me entreat. I declare, I——"

"O Miss Bury," said Eugene, smiling, but with much seriousness of tone and look, "let me meet anything but trifling now. Hear me attentively, I beseech, I implore you. When we first met, I was on the point of flying for ever from a world where I had experienced little comfort, where I found nothing but taunting looks, cold and repulsive words, and haughty indifference, even from those who, like that man who just now left the room, had nothing more to allege in justification of their unkindness than—— no matter. I had satisfied myself that I was wrong in ever supposing that any circumstances could entitle a man to ele-

vate himself above the rank in which Heaven had placed him——"

"Oh, surely you were *not* wrong, Mr. Hamond," said Emily, in a tone of bashful remonstrance, "there were circumstances—your talents—your education, I should say——"

"Yes," said Hamond, "*this*, Miss Bury, it was which detained me. I should have been long since in the retirement of my native village, but for the sweet words of encouragement with which you honoured me. Your kindness, your condescension, and—you need not blush, Miss Bury, for it *is* true, or I would not say it—your beauty, too, held me back awhile, and enabled me to endure a little longer the inconveniences I have mentioned to you. I may have been mistaken, nevertheless, in the motive of that kindness," he added more slowly, and with great anxiety of manner. "Do not mistake me, Miss Bury. Dearly as I prized and treasured every word and look of kindness with which my heart was soothed, I am ready to take all the responsibility of my own inference upon my own hands. If I must do so, let me beg of you to speak freely. I love you far too well to wish that you should make the least sacrifice for my happiness——"

"I am sure, Mr. Hamond, I——"

"Let me entreat you to be convinced of this, Miss Bury, before you speak. Pray be confident with me. You may find that I am not selfish nor unworthy, although" —Hamond added, after a pause, "although you may think I stooped too low to win what you withhold from me."

The sincerity of the young gentleman's declaration had its effect on the mind of the lady. We have not learned what were the precise terms of her reply, but its meaning was evident from the conduct of Hamond. He flung himself at her feet, and suffered his ecstacies to expend themselves in certain antics and grimaces, which the respect

due to the character and gravity of a hero forbids us, as his friend and historian, to expose to the public eye.

When Martha O'Brien returned, alone, to the room where she had left her friend, she found the latter pale, trembling, and thoughtful (in quite a different mood from that in which we have left her now accepted lover), her arm and forehead resting against the harp, in the manner of a weeping muse.

"Bless me! where's Eugene Hamond gone?" said Martha, casting a sharp glance at Emily.

"Home, I believe," said the latter, seriously.

"Check-mated, I'll lay my life!"

"Nonsense, Martha, don't be foolish now."

"Scholar's mate, after all!"

"Pish! pish!" Emily said, pettishly.

"Well, how was it, Emily? What did he say to you?—do, do tell me, and I won't say a word about the 'ripe peaches,' nor the 'little holiday,' nor the 'three moves,' nor the 'drawn game,' nor—"

"Poo! poo! I really believe your little portion of common sense is going."

"Well, there! I won't laugh again—there, now is a sober face for you. Now, tell me how it was."

"'Pon my word, Martha, I hardly know myself. I scarcely knew where I was when—I don't know—but I believe the fellow asked me to marry him—and—"

"And you——but you look paler, Emily!—you are trembling—lean on me—there—I'm sure I would not have said a word if I thought——"

The strangeness of the scene which she had gone through, the hurried manner and intense passion with which she had been addressed, the importance and seriousness of the consequences which she had drawn upon herself, only now rushed upon Emily's mind, and filled her with agitation. She drew a long, deep sigh, and, flinging her arms around the neck of her young friend, wept aloud upon her bosom.

Many of our sensible readers may wonder at all this, but every girl as young as Emily will feel that we are telling the truth.

There is a pleasure to those who are possessed of faculties microscopical enough for the investigation, in tracing up to their first cause the thousand impulses which govern the actions of that sex who are most the creatures of impulse—in winding through the secret recesses of the female heart, and detecting in the very centre of the "soft labyrinth" the hidden feeling, whatever it is, which dictates the (to us) unaccountable caprices we are so frequently made to suffer under, and which does its work so privately that even they, the victims of its influence and the slaves of its will, seem almost unconscious of its existence. Few, however, are gifted with the fineness of penetration requisite for such delicate scrutiny, and we are too honest and charitable to wish to be among the number. Neither, perhaps, is precision requisite for our purpose, whose business is rather with action than with motive, and whose part it is merely to submit a certain train of results which are to be accounted for, and acknowledged or rejected, by the philosophy, the feeling, and the imagination of the reader. We shall not, therefore, attempt any laboured analysis of the new causes of disagreement which speedily sprung up between the lovers, after every thing appeared to have been so smoothly arranged between them, after the consent of Emily's guardian had been obtained, and even Mr. O'Neil had began to reason himself into a toleration of the young nabob. Hamond's ready talking had taken Emily quite by surprise; and it is pretty certain that if she had been left a longer time to deliberate, Hamond would have been put to a longer term of probation. She felt vexed with her own easiness, and a little alarmed at the inference her lover might draw from it. She had not done justice to her own value. Besides, Hamond's way of love-making was any thing, she persuaded herself, but flattering to her desire of

influence. He had not sufficiently kept her superiority in mind—he had been so impudently collected and *sensible*, so presumptuously self-possessed. The more she thought on the subject the more convinced she was of the necessity of impressing him with a proper sense of the honour he had obtained.

The means which she adopted to accomplish this, however, were not the happiest in the world. Hamond was not much struck by the pettish and sometimes rather cold manner in which she was accustomed to receive him, as there was nobody more disposed to make allowances for the influence of a peculiar education; but when he observed indications of a marked haughtiness in her demeanour, when she began to speak fluently of genealogies in his presence, to quote Marmontel and De Lolme on the advantage of titles, to talk pathetically of ill-sorted matches, of poor Addison and his high-born dowager—he felt as if a new light, or rather a new darkness, were rushing into his soul. He hushed up his feelings, however, with the utmost caution, resolving to creep unawares and with a velvet footstep into the very centre of her character, and shape his conduct according to the conformations which would be there revealed to him.

"I begin to believe," said he, "that I was mistaken in supposing that there could even be an exception to the general position, that it is as easy to brush the shades of her phases from the moon's disk as to sift out the draff of pride and coldness from high birth. My single lonely instance begins to fail me. I will try it farther, however."

Hamond thus proceeded, hiding his apprehension of her meaning from her, and consequently drawing her out every day into more decided slights and sneers. He had almost made up his mind on the subject, when, one evening, as he was sitting by her side at a small party of friends, some of whom had come to town for the purpose of assisting at the nuptial ceremony, the conversation happened to turn on the comic peculiarities of our friend Reamy O'Lone.

"O, he's the drollest creature in the world," said Emily. He never troubles himself to inquire what the object may be of any commission that he receives, but just does whatever you ask him, like a clock, not out of stupidity neither, but merely from a wish to steer clear of any responsibility to himself. It was only a week since, Hamond told him, as he was going to bed at night, that he would want to send him here to Miss Bury in the morning, expecting of course that poor Remmy would ask to know his message in the morning, before he set off. But Remmy would not ask. Not he, indeed. He was here with me at the 'first light,' as he said himself. 'Well, Remmy,' said I, 'what brought you here so early?' 'Whethin, I dun know, Miss,' says Remmy, 'but *the* master told me he'd want me to step over to your honour to day mornen, so I thought most likely, Miss, you must know what is it ail'ded him.' Hamond was telling me a still more curious anecdote about him. He was sent once to a fair in Munster, the fair of Hanna—Venna—Shana—what was it, Hamond?"

"Shanagolden," said Eugene, bowing and smiling.

"O yes, the fair of Shanagolden. His mistress wanted to purchase half a dozen mug—hog—pig."

"*Piggins*, they were," said Hamond in reply to her puzzled look, "p-i-g pig, g-i-n-s gins, piggins," spelling the word, to show how coolly and equably he took it. "A kind of wooden vessel used for drinking the coagulated residuum of milk, called by the peasantry thick, or skimmed milk."

"Yes," added Emily. "Well, his mistress desired Remmy to purcha e half a dozen piggins, and provided h'm with money for those as well as many other articles. She was rather an anxious poor lady, however, and fearing that Remmy might forget his message, charged about a dozen other friends of hers, who were also going to the fair, to repeat it to him if they should come in contact with him.

They all did so, as it happened, and Remmy, determined to punish the good lady for her distrust in his talents, took each as a separate message, and came home in the evening as heavily loaded with piggins as Moses Primrose with his green spectacles."

After the merriment which was occasioned by Emily's arch manner and the exquisite imitation, which she contrived to introduce, of Hamond's native dialect, had subsided, some one asked who this Remmy O'Lone was?

"O 'pon my honour, that would puzzle the heralds themselves to tell you, I believe," said Emily, rapidly and lively. "Who is he, Hamond? *No relation of ours?*"

The moment she had uttered the words, she would have given a great deal that it had been in her power to unsay them. Ninety-nine men in a hundred might have passed over the jest, but she ought to have known enough of Hamond to judge that he would be the hundredth man in the case. Even those of the company, who secretly enjoyed her little *cuts* at Hamond, looked grave and silent at this broad insult. The young man himself grew pale and red, attempted to say something good-humoured in reply, but his voice failed him, the mirth stuck in his throat—and fell back upon his heart in a burning flood of gall and bitterness. He did not attempt to speak again—and the general tone of the conversation acquired an air of restraint and awkwardness, which was still more observable in the portion that Emily contributed to it than in any other. Hamond addressed himself, during the remainder of the evening, to Martha O'Brien, while young E—— took place by the side of Emily, and succeeded in persuading himself, notwithstanding her occasional fits of absence and indirect answers, that he had made more way in her estimation on this night than on any other since he had achieved the honour of her acquaintance. His assiduity, however, was absolute torture to Emily, who was anxiously looking out for an opportunity of doing away the unkind-

ness she had blundered upon. None occurred. Once only as she glanced towards him she met Martha's eyes, who compressed her lips, raised her hand slightly, and tossed her head, as much as to say, "*You have done it!*" to which Emily's frightened smile as plainly responded—"*Done what?*"

The company at length separated. Hamond shook hands with Miss O'Brien, bowed formally to Emily, and hurried out of the house, appearing not to notice the slight action which the latter used to detain him. This indication was too palpable to be misconceived. Emily clasped her hands, pressed one against her brow, shuddered a little, and did not speak during that night.

When she arose the next morning, the following letter lay among others on her toilet. A fearful misgiving clung about her heart as she recognised the hand. She made the door fast, and prepared herself by summoning all her pride to her assistance, before she ventured to break the seal. The contents were simply these:—

"For the last week I have been led to think, by your demeanour towards me, that the consent with which you honoured me was the effect rather of a hurried and momentary kindness than of the free and settled affection which could only make it dear to me. I had, therefore, intended to restore it to you before last night; although, I believe, you will do me the justice to acknowledge that I abstained (in violence to my own heart) from using any of the privileges of passion in seeking it, and appealed rather to your reason than your feeling throughout. But a circumstance which took place last night, and which, I suppose, you remember, has shown me (I say this after much reflection) that ours would not, under any circumstances, be a fortunate union. The woman who can wound the feelings of her lover can hardly be expected to respect those of her husband. *I thought too, that I could discern a cause* for

your demeanour towards me. I wish not that my own selfish affections should interfere with *that*. Mine must be a bitter fate from henceforth, Emily, but I had rather endure it all than make it light and happy at the expense of your inclinations. I return to my humble station with a wiser head and a heavier heart than when I left it. I go from the scorn of the rich to the pity of the poor, from the busy mirth of this fascinating world to the lowliness of my provincial life, to the solitude of a fireside that I once fondly dreamed would be a happy one, but which must now remain for ever desolate. Farewell, Emily, and may your high-born lover be as truly, as tenderly, and devotedly attached to you as I would have been."

What *cause?—That!*—What? were the first questions which Emily asked in communion with her own heart after she had perused the letter. The natural quickness of her woman's apprehension, however, enabled her to clear up the mystery, and no sooner was it visible than she hastened to remedy the error which she had committed. A short struggle only took place between her Irish pride and her Irish love, and the latter (as is indeed generally the result of such encounters) bore away the palm. She wrote as follows:—

"The circumstance to which you allude was not so entirely premeditated as you imagine. I acknowledge that I have committed an error, for which I am sincerely sorry. Believe me, I did not mean to do anything so unkind to myself as to make you seriously uneasy for a moment. Pray come to me, Eugene, and I will engage to convince you of this. My heart will not be at peace till I have had your forgiveness. It was a light sin for so heavy a retaliation as you threaten me with. Once again, come hither quickly. E. B.

"The *cause* which you speak of is so wholly without foundation, that it was a considerable time before I could

even form a wild conjecture at the import of that part of your letter."

When Emily had this letter folded, she rung for her attendant and sent her for a taper.

"Who brought this, Nelly?" she asked as the latter (a rather unfashionable *soubrette*, but retained on the entreaty of her mother, Emily's nurse) re-entered the room with a light.

"Misther O'Lone, Miss," said Nelly.

"Is he gone?"

"O no, Miss,—he's below in the servants' hall, aten a taste."

"I do not like," said her mistress, holding the letter in her hand as if hesitating—"to commit it to his keeping. He's such a stupid fellow, that he may lose it."

"They belies him that toult you so, Miss, saven your presence," said Nelly, with an indignant toss of her head. "May be a little o' Remmy's sense 'ud be wanten to them that wor so free wit their tongue."

"It is well that he has so good a friend to see justice done to his name," said Emily, lowering her eyelids and smiling on her young handmaid, who blushed deeply.

"O fait, Miss, it's no great friends he has in me, only the *crachter* they gives of him that knows him best," said Nelly.

"Well, I will try him on your commendation, Nelly. In the servants' hall, do you say?"

"Iss, Miss, I'll send him out upon the landen-place to you."

When Remmy was summoned from his comfortable seat by the great coal fire, he started up hastily, laid down the cup of tea which he had been drinking, smoothed his hair over his brow, and anxiously clearing all appearances of the amusement in which he had been indulging from his outward man, he hurried towards the door. As he laid

his hand on the handle, he suddenly turned round, and in a countenance of much alarm, asked :—

"I wouldn't have the sign o' liquor on me, Nelly? would I?"*

"Is it after the tay you'd have it, you innocent?" said Nelly, smiling in scorn at his simplicity.

Remmy did not stop to dispute the matter with her, but hurried into the hall, where he found Emily standing on the staircase, and expecting him. He turned out his toes, made his best bow, and then fixed himself in an attitude of the deepest attention, his head thrust forward and thrown slightly on one side, so as to bring both eyes into a parallel line with hers, his ears elevated, and his mouth half open, as if he were endeavouring to receive her commands at every possible aperture of his senses.

"Remmy," said the young lady, "I wish you to take this letter to your master—"

"Iss, Miss——"

"Stay a moment—"

"O why shouldn't I, Miss. I'd do anything in the——"

"I'm convinced of that, Remmy, but I only wish you to attend to me—"

"Oh then I'll engage I will, Miss. Well, sure I'm houlden me tongue now any way," he added, as another impatient gesture from Emily solicited his attention.

"Give that letter safe, Remmy ; and here, I have given you a great deal of trouble lately, you will buy something with these," putting into his hand a number of the small notes which were current at the time. "Take care of the letter," she added, as she tripped up stairs, leaving Remmy fixed in a position of comic wonder and gratitude.

"One, two, three, four—an' a pound—five, six! Six three-and-nine-penny notes, and a pound!" he exclaimed, as he stood on the brick floor of the servants' hall, counting

* *Would I have?* or *would you have?* among the lower Irish means, *have I?* or *have you?*

the papers as he folded them, and buried them in the bottomless and sunless cavern of his livery pocket. "Now, Nelly, we'll be saven somethen, yourself and myself. Would you have a *loand* of a needle and thread you'd give me.

"For what, Remmy, honey?" said the young soubrette, with the utmost graciousness of tone and manner.

"To put a stitch in the pocket o' my coat then," said Remmy, "in dread I'd lose the little writing she *gay* me out of it, asthora-machree, you wor! An' indeed, it isn't the only *stitch** I'll have about me, Nelly," he added with a tender smile, as he laid his hand on his heart.

"There's no standen you at all, Remmy, you're such a lad! Well, aisy, aisy a while an I'll get it for you." And favouring him with one of her richest smiles, she left the hall.

"No, then, but there's no standen *you* for a cute lady," her swain said in soliloquy, with a hard smile, a knowing wink, and a shake of the head that had almost as much meaning in it as my Lord Burleigh's. "Isn't it sweet she is grown upon me all in a hurry, now the moment she sees I have the money. Ah, these women! There's no end to 'em at all, that's what there isn't. A while ago whin I hadn't as much as 'ud pay turnpike for a walken stick—when my pockets were so low that if you danced a hornpipe in one of 'em, you wouldn't break your shins against a haip'ny—then 'twas all on the high horse with her," elevating his head and waving his hand in imitative disdain. "Nolly me Dan Jerry! Who daar say black is the white o' me eye? and now, the minute the money comes, I'll be bail she turns over a new lafe. They may get the bottom of the Devil's Punch Bowl in Killarney, or the Poul Dhub of Knockfierna, or the Bay o' Biscay, that they says hasn't e'er a bottom at all to id, only all water intirely; but the man that 'll get to the rights of a woman will go a start deeper than any of 'em, I'm thinken. The boys† arn't equal at all for 'em that way

* *Stitch*—any internal pain. † Men.

in taken your measure as it ware wit' a look, while you'd be thinken o' nothen, and thinken they wor thinken o' nothen, but 'tis they that would all the while; but it's only fair, poor craturs," he added with a compassionate and tolerating tone—"as they're wake one way, they ought to be strong another, or else sure they'd be murdered intirely. They couldn't stand the place at all for the boys, af they hadn't a vacancy at 'em that way in 'cuteness, inwardly. Murder! murder! but it's they that does come round us in one way or another——Ah! the girl in the gap, an' duck o' diamonds you wor," he added, rapidly changing his manner, as Nelly re-entered with the needle and thread—"Talken of you to meself I was, while you wor away, I'm so fond o' you. Imaging your peckthur to myself, as it ware, in my own mind." And laying the letter on the window, while he took off his coat, for the more convenience, he proceeded with Nelly's assistance to incarcerate the precious epistle.

In a few minutes a line of circumvallation was drawn around the fortified receptacle, and Remmy having satisfied himself that no possible point of egress or ingress was left undefended, took a moving farewell of Nelly, and hastened to acquit himself of the responsibility which he had taken upon his shoulders. We shall see *how* he acquitted himself in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

These women are strange things.
'Tis something of the latest now to weep—
You should have wept when he was going from you,
And chain'd him with those tears at home.
—*Scornful Lady.*

THE danger and inconvenience of extremes, are, I believe, coeval with men's experience. Had Emily left Remmy to the guidance of his own natural share of prudence, the great probability is that her letter would have reached its

destination in perfect safety; but the *extreme* vigilance which she induced him to exercise, greatly lessened the number of chances in its favour. He certainly did not once cease thinking of it from the moment he left the house until he arrived at his master's door. He selected the shortest way—avoided the crowds—manfully refused two invitations to 'step in an' take a mornen' from different friends—and kept his hand continually hovering about the pocket in which the important charge was deposited. His surprise, therefore, was extreme, when, just before he ventured to awaken the slumbering echoes of the area and coal vault, he found on examination that the letter was gone.

Enigmatical as this may appear to the reader, it did not long continue so to Remmy, who discovered very speedily that amid all his great caution, while he had sewed up the pocket so securely, he never once thought of putting the letter into it. Rapid as his progress was in advance, the rate at which he retraced his steps was a great deal more expeditious; and he arrived with his face glowing in anxiety, and moist with perspiration, at Mr. O'Brien's house. He tapped at the window—rushed past Nelly, into the servant's hall—the window where he had laid it was still open—the letter had vanished. He clasped his hands and uttered a groan, such as in the recesses of Warwick-lane, the sturdy bullock utters, after it has received the *coup de grace*, from the practised arm of the victualler.

"Nelly, we're done for!—I lost the letter. You wouldn't have it, would you?"—You wouldn't see it after me there upon the windy?"

"Fait an' I'm sure dat I didn't, Remmy."

Another groan. "An' after all the charges she *gay*, me about it. I wouldn't face her wit sech a story for the world. Lord direct them that tuk it, whoamsoever they wor, but they did great harm, this mornen."

"T'would be better say nott'n at all about it, may be Remmy."

"Who knows but it's true for you? I wouldn't tell herself such a foolish thing as that I lost it, for the world. I'll tell you how it is, Nelly. Better lave it to 'emselves, eh?—Them bits o' writen they do be senden one, one to another, is nothen, you see, but love letters, that way, and sure it's no loss what was in that scrap of paper when they'd be married shortly for life."

"True for you, Remmy."

"May be they wouldn't talk of it at all whin they'd meet, an' if they did itself, sure all that'll be about it is a scolden, the same as I'd get now af I toult it. Do you see now, Nelly, honey?"

"Oh iss, an' I think it stands wit raison what you say, Remmy. There'd be no *ho* wit her, sure, after given you the notes an' all," said Nelly, who felt herself in some degree implicated in the transaction by her adventurous and unhappily too enthusiastic estimation of the value of her lover's head. "I wouldn't face her after the notes, any way."

"May be to take 'em *of** me she would, eh?" said Remmy, in additional alarm.

"O she's too much of a lady for that, but indeed she would begridge that it was themselves wint in place o' de letter."

It was finally arranged between them that Hamond should learn nothing of the letter from Remmy, and, if possible, that its miscarriage should be also kept secret from Miss Bury.

Notwithstanding the tone of his letter, which in reality he more than half believed, Hamond was not prepared to be taken so immediately at his word as Emily appeared by her silence to have done. The certainty of his fate, moreover, was confirmed to him by the flourishing account Remmy gave of the jocund health and spirits in which he had left the young lady; the brogue-footed Mercury conceiving that he could not better supply the loss of the let-

* From.

ter than by communicating all the pleasing intelligence his own observation or invention could furnish.

Whatever Emily's feelings were on the receipt of Hamond's letter—how deep soever the regret and remorse which it awakened within her spirit; how fierce soever the struggle which she had to sustain against her roused-up pride, it may readily be supposed that the apparently contemptuous silence with which her last, gentle, tender, and (in her own judgment) humiliating confession was treated, was not calculated to alleviate the convulsion in her mind. The first day passed over in anxious vigilance, the next in anger and deep offence, the third in wild alarm, the fourth in awe-struck, deadly certainty of misery—for proud and high-hearted as she was, the fate which she so unwittingly earned for herself *was* misery to her. A week passed away, but no Hamond, nor no indication of his existence arrived at her guardian's house.

It is perhaps one of the most costly charges attendant on the maintenance of pride, that its votaries relinquish all claim to the comforts of human sympathy. When it happens moreover (as unfortunately was the case in the instance of Emily Bury) that this dearly purchased folly is lodged in a bosom otherwise filled with gentle and softening affections, the cruel tyranny which it exercises over them is sufficient to make life a protracted sickness under any circumstances, and more especially so when the sufferer is compelled to be his own only comforter—to nourish the lonely smothering agony within his heart, and make it his sole care to confine the flame that is secretly making ashes of his peace, so that it shall be evident through no clink or cleft in his demeanour. Both the pride and the affection of our heroine received a violent stimulus from this *demele* with her lover. When she stooped so low as to solicit his forgiveness in the terms which she used, she had not the remotest possible apprehension that her condescension could be unappreciated or ineffectual. If the question had ever oc-

curred to her mind by accident, it is not easy to conjecture whether the letter would ever have been forwarded. But she wrote in an interval of lucid kindness and natural generosity—love's bounty was at the moment unchecked by the caution of her cold ruling passion—she wished to make Hamond an ample compensation for the unkindness of which he complained. She pictured to her own heart the gushing rapture, the tears of love, of gratitude, and ecstacy which should for ever wash away the remembrance of that single blot in their affection—that unhappy jar, which, however, she, in the fond confidence of her sanguine love, taught her judgment to regard only as one of those useful misunderstandings which make the hearts of lovers more closely acquainted than ever—a momentary shadow—a trimming of the lamp which would eventually serve only to strengthen and purify its flame. She had no fear that Hamond really intended to extinguish it—and when that fear *did* come upon her heart, darkness deep and absolute came and abode there with it.

She had not even the consolation of her friend Martha's confidence: and the easy impenetrable indifference which the latter (though by no means dull of inference or apprehension) observed in all Emily's conduct, induced her to believe that in reality the circumstance did not clash in any degree with her inclinations. Still, however, she was totally at a loss to discover a motive for the conduct of her young friend. It was true that the latter, who would not permit a single inquiry or even remark at all verging on the subject, received the visits of the young Baron E———, but she could not by this manœuvre hoodwink Martha so completely as to prevent her seeing that it was a mere feint—a mask, under cover of which some concealed and lurking passion was laying the foundation of a far different fortune for its victim. So far was the haughty young Irishwoman enabled to conquer her own nature, that she was much less frequently to be found alone than usual; she forced herself

into the glare and bustle of society, for fear the slightest ground of suspicion might be afforded that she could for a moment descend to the consciousness of a natural emotion; her smiles were showered around in greater profusion than before; carmine and all the precious succedanea of the period were anxiously made to tread in the steps of her departing bloom, and render its flight as secret and imperceptible as that of the peace of mind on which it had been nurtured: her mirth was louder (if loud it could be at any time) than before; and many even of her most intimate friends began to congratulate her on her enfranchisement from what now appeared to have been a weary thraldom. Amid all this proud superiority of mind, however, Emily was a more real object of compassion than the most yielding, and helpless, and forsaken of her sex; and she could not have brought her spirit to bear its burthen so enduringly, but for the resentment which the positive injustice with which her letter had been treated by Hamond, excited in her mind, and to which she constantly referred her heart in moments of depression. When a little time rolled by, however, and regret began to assume the mastery over anger, she found the task of dissimulation more burthensome than before. When she happened to be left for any time to the company of her own feelings, they would rush upon her with such an o'er-mastering influence as to quite subdue her resolution, and drag her down to the level of plain humanity, in her own despite. Her bosom would heave, her frame would tremble, and the pent-up sorrow swell and labour in her throat, until the approach of some wandering inmate of the mansion startled the sleeping dragon of self-esteem—when her character would again assume its armour—she would repel by a violent effort the rising passion, press her hands flat and close upon her neck, to stifle the rebellious impulse of her woman's nature—and like Lady Townley, in her gambling mood, "make a great gulp and swallow it."

Nearly a fortnight had thus elapsed, when, as Emily was laying aside her dress (after an excursion to Howth with her friend Martha and some acquaintances,) in order, to prepare for the evening, her attendant, Nelly, entered the room as usual to give her assistance. Her mistress, who was not so guarded in the presence of the soubrette, as in that of her more sensitive and sharp-eyed friends, and who was fatigued in heart and soul from the toilsome pleasures of the forenoon, sat at the table, her arm leaning on the toilet-cloth, her hand supporting her forehead, and her eyes fixed in thoughtful melancholy upon the floor.

"Isn't it greatly Mr. Hamond wouldn't call before he went, Miss?" Nelly said timidly, as she passed softly by the young lady's chair.

Emily raised her head quickly and in strong interest—"Went! whither, Nelly?"

"Sure, never a know do I know, Miss, but to be walken down there, by Eden-quay, and to meet Remmy O'Lone, an he goen wit a walise or a kind of a portmantle onder his arm, ont to the Pigeon-house."

"For what purpose, did he say?" asked Emily, endeavorring to subdue the cruel anxiety which began to stir within her bosom.

"I'll tell you that, Miss. 'Good morrow, Remmy,' says I. 'Good morrow kindly, Nelly,' says he, 'how is your Misses?' say she. 'Pretty well, Remmy,' says I, 'considering.' 'I'm not goen to see you any more now, Nelly,' says he. 'Why so?' says I. 'Wisha then, I don't know,' says he,' but my master is for foreign parts, direct,' says he, so—"

"Abroad!—going abroad? leaving Ireland!" Emily exclaimed, starting up in undisguised alarm.

"The very words I said meself, Miss. 'What!' says I, 'goen abroad,' says I, 'laven Ireland,' says I. 'Iss, in trawt,' says he, 'the passage is tuk an' all, an' this,' says he, showen me the portmantle the same time, 'is the last

thing that's not on board yet—himself is on the high seas be this time, or will be before—'"

"Good heaven, I was not prepared for this. This is too dreadful!" Emily repeated, half aloud, as if unconscious of an auditor.

"Me own very word to him, Miss. 'It's dreadful, Remmy,' says I, 'an you too,' says I, 'that ought to have *some* sense, any way, goen after a bedlamite,' says I. 'Sure you know, Nelly,' says he, again, 'I can't help meself. He that's bound he must obey, while he that's free can run away,' says he. 'I must do the master's bidden, Nelly—his *hipsey dicksy* is enough for me.' Ah, Miss Em'ly, sure it's often I heerd that men was rovers, an it's now we both feels it to our cost."

"I desire," said her mistress, less in a humour at present to be amused than to be annoyed, "that I may not be implicated in such ridiculous associations." Then resuming the train of her abstracted reflections, while Nelly submissively disavowed any intention to do so wicked a thing as to 'implikit' so good a 'Misses,' Emily again murmured—"Gone!—Could it possibly have been anything—any new insult in my last letter, that—"

"I beg pard'n, Miss," said Nelly, "but what was that you were sayen about a letter?"

"I gave it you, Nelly, that morning, and—"

"In dread, you are, that it is anythen in that Mr. Hamond tuk offence at. Make your mind aisy on that head, Miss, for he couldn't do it."

"How do you mean?"

Nelly, who thought concealment any longer useless, and perhaps mischievous, replied to the last question, by giving her young mistress a detailed account of the transaction, with which the reader is already acquainted.

"And you knew of this, Nelly, and said not a word of it to me!"

"O then, heav'n forgive us all, Miss. I can't say but I did, indeed; an' sure if I knew it would be any hurt—"

Emily had listened to her first with astonishment—then anger—then utter horror: until at length, as the girl circumstantially unfolded her iniquity, the offence assumed a magnitude too gigantic for any extremity of rage or of punishment. She grew pale, trembled—and at length sunk with a burst of tears in the attendant's arms, as she exclaimed—"My poor girl, you did not know what you were doing, but you have ruined your mistress."

The shrill scream which Nelly set up at seeing the condition of her mistress, though checked almost instantly by the latter, brought Miss O'Brien into the room, who was shocked and terrified by the condition in which she found her friend. She hastened to snatch her from the arms of her waiting-maid, to support her upon her own bosom, and endeavour, by caresses and the most tender attentions, to restore her to some degree of composure.

"Nelly, leave the room," said Miss O'Brien. "What, in the name of wonder, can have happened, Emily?" she added, as the weeping and repentant girl obeyed her. "What does this mean?"

"It means, Martha, that I have been practising a fatal cheat upon you and on my own heart. Hamond has left the country, and under the conviction that I have acted a false and selfish part towards him."

"I was not prepared to hear that he was gone," said Martha, a little puzzled, "but, I declare, Emily, I thought from your conduct this time past, that—"

"I know it. It was my wish to make you think so. I had written him a note, full of penitence, and requesting to see him here as soon as possible. He did not come, and I was anxious to save myself from the contempt which a knowledge of the degrading slight must necessarily occasion. But I now find that by some awkwardness of our servants, that letter was never received by him—and here

have I been the dupe of my own folly, while he believes himself to have been treated with coldness and ingratitude. O Martha, I wish I had taken your advice, when last we spoke on the subject. You knew him better than I."

"Be comforted, Emily. It is fortunate that you have learned the circumstance in time to effect an explanation. If he has gone, we cannot find it difficult, either through his banker or some other channel, to procure a clue to his probable residence abroad—and all shall be well in a few weeks."

Fate, however, seemed disposed to make the lovers more deeply sensible of their mutual folly, by falsifying this consoling prediction. An accident which had intervened confirmed Hamond in his resolution of relinquishing his passion, if possible—at all events, of separating himself from its object for ever.

He had lingered, in the unacknowledged hope of receiving some inducement to a reconciliation, at his old residence, for about a fortnight after he had sent the letter above-mentioned. In the midst of his wavering and irresolute humours, however, he received an account from Remmy of the increased frequency of Lord E——'s visits. This circumstance, combined with Emily's silence, completely unsettled the hope that was beginning to take ground (for love's hope requires but light footing) on the barren possibility of a misconception.

"And now," said Hamond, after he had dispatched his servant to secure him a place in the packet, which was to sail on the following morning, "now, farewell high life and happiness, for ever! Farewell the sweet anxieties and mortifying kindnesses of patronage—the chance courtesies—the eleemosynary smiles that are flung in pity to the unfriended mendicant for fashion"—he stamped violently and set his teeth as the degrading epithet suggested itself to his mind. "Welcome now the wide world, with all its changes of clime, condition, and fortune! Welcome

my own vulgar station. Its coarseness is but the wholesome blustering of nature's own elements, which may be much more easily provided against than the secret, withering mildew that is silently showered upon the heart, amid all the sunshine and summer kindness of high-born hypocrisy. Farewell love! and welcome toil, travel, and extremity! Farewell, Emily! let pride and honour make good to your happiness all the devoted tenderness which you have rejected, and I will myself say that you are wealthy in your loss!"

He repeated his farewell with a deeper and drearier feeling, however, on the following morning, when he stood on the packet, and cast his eyes with a fondness over the distant hills of Wicklow, that separated him from his old Munster home. The morning was a still and beautiful one, and the face of the bay, agitated only by the bulk of its own waters into that leaping undulation which we cannot describe otherwise than by referring the reader (in defiance of the imputation of a common-place affectation) to Claude Lorraine's embarkation pictures, looked clear and glassy-green. The pier was crowded with passengers who were waiting to see their effects safely stowed before they took their own places in the vessel, with clamorous jinglemen and ragged half-starved porters; members of the exiled parliament made up for the winter campaign; and adventurers of every description, who devoutly believed that gold and fame grew like blackberries upon hedges everywhere but in poor Ireland, and who, if they did not actually suppose that the houses in London were tiled with pancakes, and the streets paved with wedges of gold—yet would have staked their existence that something very good must be had there, or so many people would not be constantly going and *never* returning; and lulled their hearts with the delicious promise of a delusion quite as vain, if not so palpably absurd as that above alluded to of poor Whittington. They saw not—and Hamond saw not *then*, though

his after experience brought the picture in all its reality before his eyes—they saw not the thousand causes of that *never*—that eternal absence of those who trod before them the path which they were then treading, and had never . . traced their steps. They heard only of the fortunes of those who lived and prospered—they knew not—they asked not of the fate of the many who failed and perished, and whose tale remained untold. They beheld not, in the blindness of their sanguine hearts, the host of evils which counterbalance the lonely and fortuitous good fortune of the single adventurer. They saw not the poor but contented cottager of the Irish hills estranged from the careless simplicity of his turfen hearth, and driving a miserable trade amid the vile and stifling recesses of St. Giles's and Saffron-hill; with some bits of old cord, a knife-brick, a few heads of greens, a trace of onions, a bushel of coals, a mangling machine, and a few pounds of potatoes for his whole stock; or hurrying to its close the wasting flame of a miserable life amid the abominations of a London night-house. They saw not the wretched basket-woman of Covent-garden market, whom the demon of discontent had found living in the happy ignorance of her own wants, the grace and blooming ornament of some mountain hamlet in her native land. They saw not the baffled politician burying himself in the gloom of his lonely apartment, after having squandered a life in earning for himself the curses of his own people and the contempt of those among whom he sojourned—they saw him not as he drew the last, long sigh, and looked the long, last look towards the window that opened on the west, ere he put to its fatal use the weapon that was for ever to shut out the sight and sound of the ruin he had made from the organs of his mortal sense. They saw not the young, acutely sensitive, and fine-principled enthusiast, whom the folly of friends or the consciousness of merit forced abroad upon the world, shrinking in disgust and agony from the cruel reality which dis-

placed the faëry splendours of his own fond imagination, or curbing his high spirit down to the mean and crawling use of a hireling and a time-server—bartering his youthful principle for bread, or, perhaps, sternly preserving it, and turning aside from the wonder, the scorn, and indifference of the world, to die in want and solitude, and hide his brilliant qualities of heart and mind in the gloom of a pauper's grave, unthought of and unpitied.

While Hamond sat indulging the barren and listless humour which the utter ruin of his own hopes had cast upon him, his eye was attracted by the sight of a small vessel, which was rapidly gliding by them in the direction of the hill of Howth. The distance was not so great as to prevent his fully distinguishing the persons and features of its crew; and when he had done so, his heart bounded within his bosom, as if it would have deserted its mansion. Miss O'Brien, and Emily Bury were seated near the stern, and an elegant-looking young man, whom he had no difficulty in recognising as the obnoxious E——, was seated near the latter. He was apparently describing to her the effect of some particular scenery in the country, for his hand was frequently pointed towards the Wicklow hills, and Emily often smiled and bowed her head as in assent. Hamond felt his frame tremble, and his heart sink and sicken, as he leaned against the mast of the vessel.

The dreariness which his own want of object or interest occasioned with his soul, was tenfold increased by the apparent anxiety and bustle of those around him. He felt, as he turned aside from the painful testimony, which his own eyes afforded him of his mistress's falsehood—and as he gazed upon the crowd of busy faces that were flitting about his own, as if he were among beings of another world, in whose proceedings he could take no possible interest—or as if he had returned from the grave, to look, with the full knowledge of the utter vanity of all earthly pursuits, upon the dry and common toil of his unseeing species. Presently

a fellow struck up some popular air, on a clarionet, upon the deck of the packet that lay near. The well-known sounds produced an instant bustle among the passengers. They threw by their cloaks, and the country fellows cautiously keeping their bundles in their hands, and occasionally wheeling their sticks, in an impulse of ecstatic delight, with a "hoop whi-hk!" above their heads, kept up a pattering heel-and-toe measure, upon the boards. Many of those on board were about to revisit the scenes of their early youth—some few, perhaps, returning crowned with wealth and success after a long life of toil and trial, were enjoying, in anticipation, the delight of pouring into the lap of an impoverished parent, and bringing peace and joy into the bosom of a sorrowing household. Another, perhaps, was about to feel once more upon his cheek the tears of a devoted wife, and the innocent kisses of the children from whom he had been torn by the tyranny of circumstances—another might be returning to the house and the affections of a forsaken and forgiving father. Another, yet, had a first love to meet, and even he, the most desolate among them, who had no such immediate friends to welcome him to the home he had left—felt his spirit mount, and his heart make healthful music within him, while he thought of laying him down

"To husband out life's taper at the close,"

among the wild hills and "pleasant places," where he had spent the happiest years (it is an old thing to say, but its staleness may be pardoned for its truth,) that heaven accords to man, in a world where *no* positive happiness can exist; but where life runs on between regret for the past—want for the present—and hope for the future. Hamond, on the contrary, was leaving a land, which was and was not, his home; and where he had filled a nameless place in society, without stamp or station, possessing claims to various conditions, and properly belonging to none.

A light wind shortly sprung up, and the vessel left the land. Hamond again caught a distant glimpse of Emily's little pleasure boat, as it glided swiftly on its course. The morning sun, falling on the slate roofs along the shore, and on the tarred and patched mainsails of the smacks which were used for the destruction of the famous Dublin-bay-herrings (a staple article of fast-fare, as popular in their Irish metropolis as the renowned John Dory at Billingsgate,) gave an appearance of gaudy animation to the scene. Onward still the vessel went, and the receding music came over the waters like a farewell. The pleasure-boat became invisible in the haze of the morning sunshine, and Hamond plunged into the gloom of his cabin an estranged and altered man.

CHAPTER VI.

> ——— Delay the bridal? Bid
> Our friends disperse and keep their mirth unwasted
> For another morn? Fie! fie! Have you a name
> To care for? What a scandal will it bring
> Upon your fame!—A youth, brave, noble, fortunate,
> Worthy as fair a fate as thou couldst offer,
> Were it made doubly prosperous. What, think you,
> Makes you thus absolute?

The haughty independence of spirit which she loved to indulge, or to affect, returned with more than its accustomed force on the heart of Emily Bury, when she learned that Hamond had finally and fully effected the half menace which his letter contained. She could hardly blame him, and she would not blame herself, so that her only resource lay in resuming the general air of indifference which she had relinquished so instantly, on discovering the mistake in which Hamond's silence originated. In this she succeeded so well, that her friend Martha was once more at a loss to conjecture what was the real effect of the disappointment she had ex-

perienced. Miss Bury, however, was perhaps too clever for her own interest; for the perfect ease and carelessness of her manner exposed her more than ever to attentions which made her heart sick, and solicitations which she feared entirely to discourage, even while her soul turned in disgust from their dull and passionless monotony. She dared not, however, suffer this secret feeling to become in any degree apparent, for she dreaded, beyond all other evils that now lay within the range of probability, any diminution of number or brilliancy in the train of her admirers. The system of duplicity (though she would esteem the term hardly applied,) involved her in many difficulties. She lost, in the first place, the confidence, and in a great measure, the friendship of Miss O'Brien, who, though she could not penetrate Emily's secret, was yet quick-sighted enough to know that her little share of influence on the mind of the latter no longer existed. Neither could she hope that the fashionable love which she had excited in the heart, or in the head perhaps, of young E—— would continue to grow and flourish on absolute coldness; and she ventured, in the fear of a second desertion, to throw him one or two words of doubtful encouragement, which he took the liberty of estimating at a far higher worth than she intended. He became importunate—she toyed and shifted her ground—he blockaded—she ponted; her friends first wondered at her, and then blamed her—and at last persecuted her. Every body said that young E—— wronged himself—that he was entitled to a far higher union—and that he was exceedingly ill-treated—Miss Bury should know her own mind—she was taking very strange airs upon her, &c. And so to relieve her conscience—and to satisfy friends—and to reward her swain for his perseverance, Emily drew a long deep sigh, and promised him marriage.

"And now 'a long day, my lord!'* if you please," she

* The usual exclamation of convicts after sentence of death has been passed.

said with a bitter gaiety, after she had listened to his raptures with great resignation.

"The shortest will be long," said her lover. "Let it be a double knot. Your friend Miss O'Brien is about to change her name next Wednesday."

"Very well," said Emily, coldly; "you will consult your own convenience, for I declare I'm not anxious one way or another."

Lord E—— had none of Hamond's sensitive folly about him. He seemed not to notice the contemptuous indifference of her manner, but resolved within his own mind to "let her know the difference," when once he had satisfied his own vanity by getting her into his power.

The weddings were celebrated with due splendour on the same day, but under very different auspices to both parties. Miss O'Brien gave her hand freely, and felt it pressed with a tenderness which assured her it was valued at its full worth; she was conscious of no evil motive—of no concealed derangement of heart; she loved quietly, and she loved well and happily. Emily, indeed, was able to sustain her part at the altar's foot, with as much apparent composure as her friend, but she could not prevent her heart from sinking (when the ceremony was actually concluded) so very low, as to render it absolutely impossible for her to sustain the part she had undertaken without suffering the actress to appear.

The friends parted soon after the ceremony, Martha O'Brien setting off with her husband for Munster, and Emily accompanying *her* lord to the house of his father. The necessity for dissimulation with the world now no longer existed, and Lady E—— felt a kind of miserable relief in touching ground at last, and feeling that at all events she could sink no further. She submitted, therefore, without murmuring, to the congratulations of her acquaintances; allowed herself to be whirled about in a magnificent dress, in order to gratify the vanity of her husband for

a few weeks, and then discovered what, indeed, before was scarcely a secret to her, that his purposes were in a great measure answered by the display, and the object of his long probation almost entirely accomplished. However ill-disposed Emily was to correspond with any manifestations of esteem or affection on his part, her womanly pride was not the less hurt by the neglect with which she soon found herself treated; and although she was far too proud to complain —the silent discontent in which she lived, and the dissipation in which she mingled, began in the course of a few years to make very perceptible inroads upon her health. Castle-Connell, Mallow, Lahinch (a watering-place on the western coast, which has of late years been superseded by Miltown-Malbay, and still more lately by the improving village of Kilkee), and many other places, were tried without success; and at length it was found expedient that she should spend some months in a foreign climate, where the air, more tempered and lighter than that of her native land, might agree better with the subdued tone of her constitution.

These months turned out to be years. E—— refused to accompany his wife, lest it should be supposed that he was putting his estate "to nurse;" and migrated to the British metropolis, as the representative in the lower house of an Irish county, where, it was said, he did not scruple putting his honour "to nurse" in the lap of the reigning minister. New connexions, or a dislike of the old, contributed to render him a permanent absentee, while Lady E——, deterred by the continuance of her ill health, and not a little by a reluctance to encounter the revival of many painful associations, seemed to have relinquished all idea of revisiting the land of her birth. Her guardian (her only relative in Ireland) had died within the year after her departure, and she had now no friends in that country for whose society she would endanger the shattered remnant of her peace of mind, by exposing it to so many rude remembrancers as must necessarily present themselves to

her senses on her return. Martha, kind and good as she had always been, until her friend thought proper to cast her off, was now the happy and virtuous wife of a sensible man (who understood nothing of romance, and hated pride, although he was a Scot), and the careful mother of a pair of chubby little Munster fellows. Without having one black drop of envy in her whole composition, Lady E—— could not help feeling that Martha, the matron, would not be the pleasantest companion in the world for Emily, the forsaken and the neglected—and she had her doubts, moreover, whether that lady would herself be anxious to renew the early friendship that had constituted the happiness of so many joyous years to both. She made no overture, therefore, and in a few years more, Emily Bury, her husband, Eugene Hamond—and the story of their strange courtship, were perfectly forgotten in the circles in which they had mingled during their residence in Ireland.

We love not to dwell longer than is necessary to the development of our tale, on the history of feelings (however interesting from their general application to human nature), in which no opportunity is afforded for illustration of national character—that being the principal design of these volumes. The reader, therefore, will allow us here to return to our own Munster, congratulating ourselves on our escape (if indeed we have escaped) from our adventurous sojourn in a quarter of Ireland which is rendered formidable to us by the prior occupation of so many gifted spirits—and where, last of all in the order of time, though far otherwise in the order of genius, the vigorous hands that penned the O'Hara Tales, have wrung from the Irish heart the uttermost relics of its character, and left it a dry and barren subject to all who shall succeed them. We return, then, with pleasure, to Munster—an unsifted soil, where we may be likely to get more than Gratiano's two grains of wheat in a bushel of chaff for our pains.

CHAPTER VII.

Let me know some little joy—
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought.
—*The Woman-Hater.*

We have our own good reasons for requesting that the reader may ask us no questions concerning the occurrences which filled up the time between Hamond's flight and the year preceding that on which our tale commenced—a year which is still remembered with sorrow by many a childless parent and houseless orphan in Ireland, and which appears to have been marked by a train of calamities new even to that country—a famine—a plague—a system of rebellion the most fearful, silent, and fatally calm that the demon of misrule ever occasioned, and which seemed as if all the hereditary evils with which the land was ever afflicted had welled out their poison from new sources upon its surface, to present a direful contrast to the hideous pageant with which it had suffered itself to be mocked on the preceding year.

In the spring, or, rather, early in the summer of this year, on a red and blowing morn, the surface of that part of the Shannon which lies between Kilrush and Loup Head, was covered with the craft which is peculiar to the river, the heavily laden and clumsy turf boats, Galway hookers provided with fish for the Limerick market, large vessels of burthen going and returning to and from the same city, and revenue cutters, distinguished by the fleetness of their speed and the whiteness of their sails from the black and lumbering craft above mentioned, and presenting, by such variety, a very lively and animated picture on the often dreary and monotonous face of the sheeted river. The red clouds, which became massed into huge and toppling piles

upon the western horizon, and confronted the newly risen sun with an angry and threatening aspect, afforded an indication, which experience had taught him to appreciate, of the weather which the boatman was destined to contend with in the course of the day. All seemed to be aware of this, and the utmost exertions were made by the helmsmen to accomplish as much as was possible of their progress before the southerly gale should become too heavy for their canvass.

On the forecastle of one of the Galway hookers, a tight-built little vessel, which, by the smallness of its bends, its greyhound length, and gunwale distinguished by a curve inward (technically called a *tumble-home*) was enabled to bear a heavier sea and make a much fleeter progress than the other open boats of the river—on the forecastle of such a vessel, two men were placed; one, who belonged to the boat, as appeared by his blue frieze jacket, ornamented with rows of horn buttons, coarse canvass trousers, red comforter, battered and bulged hat covered with an old oil cloth, and tied about with a bit of listen as a succedaneum for a hat-band; the other seated on the fluke of the anchor, in a thread-bare brown coat and cord knee-breeches, old brown hat and dark striped woollen waistcoat, and making it sufficiently manifest by his odd staring manner and raw questions that he was a passenger, and a stranger to the part of the country by which he was sailing.

"Put down your ruddher a taste, Bat," said the former to the man at the helm. "I see a squall comen."

"*See* a squall! *see* the wind!" exclaimed the man with the brown coat; "that bates all I ever heerd. They say 'pigs can see the wind,' whatever the raison of it is, but I travelled many's the mile of water fresh and salt, an' I nuvur seen a sailor that would hold to seeing the wind yit."

"You see more now than uvur you seen, far as you

went," said the boatman. "Af you put your face this way, sideways, on the gun'l o' the boat, you'll see the wind yourself comen over the waters."

The passenger, supposing that he was really about to witness a nautical wonder, did as he was directed, and placing his cheek on the *towl-pin*, looked askance in the direction of the gale—nothing doubting that it was the very invisible element itself the boatman spoke of, and not its indication in the darkening curl that covered by fits the face of the waters. At the instant that he was making his observation, however, the helmsman, in obedience to another command of "closer to wind," from his companion on the forecastle, put down the helm suddenly, and caused the little vessel to make a jerk with her prow to windward, which clipped off the mane of the next breaker and flung it over the weather bow into the face and bosom of the passenger. He shifted his place with great expedition, but not deeming it prudent to take any notice of the jeering smile which passed quickly between the boatmen, he resumed his former place at the lee side of the vessel.

"It's wet you are, I'm in dread," said the forecastle man, with an air of mock concern.

"A trifle that way," replied the other, with a tone of seeming indifference—and adding, as he composedly applied his handkerchief to the dripping breast of his coat—"Only av all the Munster boys wor nuvur to be *drier** than what myself is now, 'twould be a bad story for the publicans."

"Why thin, I see now," said the boatman, assuming at once a manner of greater frankness and good-will, "that you *are* a raal Irishman after all, be your taking a joke in good parts."

"In good parts! In *all* parts, I'm of opinion," replied the passenger merrily, extending his arms to afford a full

* *Dry*—thirsty.

view of his drenched figure. "But indeed I am, as you say, a sort of a bad Irishman."

"And your frind b'low in the cabin, what is he?"

"O, the same to be sure—and a great gintleman, too, only he's not a Milaysian like meself."

"Wasn't it a quare place for him to take—a man that I see having money so flush about him—a place in the cabin of a hooker, in place of a berth like any responsible man in the reg'lar packet?"

To this query, the passenger in the brown coat only answered by casting, first, a cautious glance towards a small square hole and trap-door in the forecastle deck, out of which the wreaths of smoke which were issuing, showed it to be a substitute for that apartment which is termed the cabin in more stately vessels. The man then crept softly towards the aperture, waved the vapour aside with his hand, and looked down. The whole extent of the nether region was immersed in an atmosphere, to which the paradox of the "palpable obscure" might have been applied and ceased to be a paradox. It was some time before the objects beneath became sufficiently discernible for the passenger to form any conjecture (if such were his intention) on the transactions which were taking place in the cabin; but when they did so, his eye was enabled to comprehend the circuit of a little excavation (as it appeared) about four feet in height, eight in breadth, and nine or ten in length, in which a number of persons, about eight or ten men and two old women, lay huddled on a heap of straw —the latter sitting erect, nursing children—the others, some looked in a pleasing forgetfulness of the world and its cares, and some quietly conversing on the state of the country—a subject of paramount interest, at that period, to all classes. Through the volumes of smoke which rolled about his head, the passenger could descry a little fire lighted on a few bricks at the end of the cabin, beside which sat a swarthy, wild-haired boy, roasting potatoes

and eggs, and seeming as much at his ease as if he were inhaling the purest aroma. Opposite to this youth—his arms folded, his legs crossed, and his head reclining against one of the ribs of the vessel—lay a person of a very singular and perplexing appearance. His eyes had all the wildness which characterises that of a maniac, and were only contradistinguished from it by the fixedness and intensity of expression with which their gaze rested on the object, whatever it was, which, for the moment, awakened the interest of their owner. His face was dragged and pale—marked with the lines of sorrow, and a little tinged with the hue of years—but so very slightly, that if it were not for the assistance which Time had received from accident and circumstance, the man might yet have taken footing within the ground of maturity. He wore a loose blue silk handkerchief on his neck—a sailor's jacket, and trousers of frieze, of the same colour—(the manufacture of some village weaver), and a double-breasted black silk waistcoat, which, opening above, afforded (in better light, however, than that in which he was now placed) a twilight glimpse of a shirt which, from its fineness and whiteness, accorded ill with the remainder of the wearer's costume, though there was something in his attitude, and in the intelligent inquiry of his "hawking" eye, which would redeem it in some measure from the charge of total inconsistency.

After he had reconnoitered the cabin to his satisfaction, the passenger drew back from the trap-door, making a wry face, as the smoke penetrated his eyes, and assaulted those unnameable apertures above the mouth, which, in this age of refinement, it may suffice to indicate by an allusion to the organ of smell.

"I might as well go down a chimbley," said he, expressing as much distaste by his manner, as Cob might be supposed to do in uttering one of his genteel invectives against "that vile, roguish tobacco."

"The taste of smoke is convanient such a night as last night was," said the boatman. "See how your friend likes it."

The passenger replied to this observation, by looking unusually wise, as if for the purpose of affording, by a counter-indication, a clue to the cause of his "frind's" peculiar opinions, and by touching his forehead mysteriously with his finger.

"Light?" asked the boatman.

"Cracked!" said the passenger. "Innocent. In some tings only, that is. For you never see how he can talk to you, at times, as sober as anybody—and at other times with a tongue that you'd think would never tire; preachen like the clargy—and at others again, man alive, he'd ate you up, you'd think, for the turn of a hand. He can't abide any o' the quality at all—that's his great point—being brought into a dale o' trouble once, on their account. He mislikes all gentlemen—"

"And ladees?"

"Iss, then, an ladies—although you seem to misdoubt that part o' my story. He can't abide anything o' the sort. Sure, av it wasn't for that, what sort of a livery would this be for me—his own gentleman (for that's me title be rights, though I darn't claim it in his presence)? or what sort of a place would that cabin be (though indeed it's a nate cabin and a tight little hooker, *for* a hooker, considering—) but not at all fitten for an estated man like him."

"Where is he from?"

"O yethen, many's the place we're from this time back, travellen hether an' thether, back'urds an' for'urds, to and fro, this way an' that way, be sea an' be land, on shipboord and every boord, in Ayshee and Europe, an' Africay an' Merrikey, an' among the Turkies and Frinch an' Creeks, an' a mort o' places an' things more than I can mintion to you now—but latterly it's from London we're comen, him-

self being appointed one o' the people for given out the money to the poor that's left witout anythen, we hear, by raisen of the great rain that was last year, that pysin'd all the *skillaans* in the airth, which the English (an' sure it's a new story wit 'em) subscribed for 'em—an' sure 'twas good of 'em for all."

"Why, then, it was. We must only take what we can of a bad debt, and sorrow a much hopes there is of all they have of ours, be all accounts."

"But it was a great relief, wasn't it? The male, an' the employment, an' all them things."

"O yethen, middlin, like the small praties. There was a mort o' money sent over, I hear; but then it was all mostly frittered away among shoepurvisors an' clerks an' them things, ont'l at last it was the same case a'most as with the poor little natural that laid out all his money on a purse, and then had nothen to put in it afther. The benefits that the English (an' sure they mane well, no doubt, only being blindfolded about the way they'll go about sarven uz)—the benefits they strive to do uz, their charter-schools, an' their binnyfactions, and all them things, reminds me of the ould fable of Congcullion, the great joyant, long ago, which in dread you mightn't have heerd, I'll tell it to you. Into Ulster it was they marched some troops, that is, of the king o' Connaught, and there they wor bate disgraceful, and they run for their life as you'd see a procter run at sight of a pike; and comen to one o' them ould castles that was blown up sence be Cromwell (the thief o' the airth!) they saized it, and kep it, and made themselves up in it, so as not to allow the sodgers of the King of Ulster withinside o' the walls. Still an' all the Ulster boys strapped to, an' they tuk the castle, barren the tower, that was defended by an ould woman only, all the rest of the Connaught boys being kilt in the fight. You see, the way up to this tower was very cross, intirely, being up one o' those crooked staircases like a cork-screw,

an sech as only one man could mount at a time, which he was sorry for, there being a key-hole in the doore at the top, an' the ould hag (the rogue!) used to shoot out an arrow out of it and through it with it, and down he'd fall stone-dead to be sure, An' the same case wit the one, whoever he'd be, that would coom up after him. Well, the king of Ulster didn't know what to do, an' he called a council o' war, an' says he to his ginerals, an' lords, an' all the great people, 'I'm fairly bothered,' siz he, 'wit this ould 'oman, an' what'll we do at all wit her?' siz he. 'I'll tell you that, then,' says one of his great ginerals; 'send for the great joyant Congeullion,' siz he, 'an av he don't make her hop,' says he, 'you may call me an honest man.' 'Who'll go for him,' siz the king of Ulster, siz he, 'or where is he to be had?' siz he. 'Con of the Fleet-foot will go for him,' siz the gineral again, meaning another joyant that was in hearen. Well an' good, Con of the Fleet-foot was sent for Congeullion the joyant, the big o' that hill overright us, that was wanderen over and hether in the woods be raisen of being bate in a fight be a grand knight o' the coort, an' haven his hair cut off for a disgrace. Well, this Con (that used to take a perch o' ground in one step) he travelled some hundreds o' miles, an' at last he found my lad in a wood in Kerry fast asleep. 'Get up here,' siz Con, 'an' come wit me, an' a pretty lad you are,' siz he, 'to have me comen to call you, an' the king an' all of 'em wanten you all so fast,' siz Con, siz he. Well became Congeullion, he never made him an answer, being fast asleep the same time. So what does Con do but to take his soord and to cut off the little finger off of him—and then you see, Congeullion stretched himself and yawned a piece, and axed what was the matter, or what fly was it that was tittlen him? So Con up and tould him the whole bizniss from first to last, about the ould 'oman, and the rest of 'em. Well, I'm maken a long story of it, they come to the king, the two of 'em, an siz Cong-

cullion, 'Now where's this woman,' siz he, '-or what am I to do with her, and sure it's a droll thing to be senden all the ways to Kerry for a gorsoon like meself to fight an old hag,' siz he. 'There she is in the air out fronten you,' siz the king. So he looked up, and what should he see above only a quern stone, like that they uses in grinden the whate, and the hag sitten up upon it, and shooten down arrows through the hole in the middle at the king's men, an' she flyen about that way be magic art in the air above. 'Aha, my lady,' thinks Congcullion in his own mind, but he said nothen, 'I think I'll soon have you down off o' your filly-foal, although it will be a nice mark to hit off,' siz he to himself, manen the hole in the quern. No sooner said than done, he tuk and he shot up an arrow right through the hole and through the woman moreover, an' down she an' her quern came tumblen into the middle of 'em and whack upon the head o' Feardia, one o' the greatest sodgers th' king had, an' med smithereens of him. 'Well, didn't I do it?' siz Congcullion. 'O yeh, wisha you did,' siz the king, 'an' more than it—an' I never seen the peer o' you,' siz he, 'for whatever good you do you're always sure to do it in a way that it would be better you didn't do it at all,' siz he.* It's the same way wit the English when they try to do good for uz here in Ireland."

"Why then 'tis in a great measure true for you—but still an' all it's a great thing for 'em to mane well any way, bekays be that mains there's hopes they'll be set right one time or another, you see."

"O yeh, then, there is. But I'd be sorry there was as little hopes of our comen safe to shore this holy mornen."

While this conversation passed between the politicians,

* Tradition is a powerful magnifier. The hero who is mentioned in the above legend, figures in O'Halloran's history as Congcullion, a knight of the Red Branch, where his dimensions shrink into the common scale of humanity.

the bad weather which had been threatened by the appearance of the morning, began to make its word good. A small handsomely-rigged sloop was the only vessel that seemed likely to dispute the palm of superiority, in point of speed, with the hooker, which last, as it appeared, was a sailer of high reputation on the river, and the trial of force, which presently took place between them, attracted the interest of those who manned the more unambitious craft. Loud were the shouts of the crews as the sloop attempted, and almost succeeded in coming between her rival and the wind, and thus causing her sails to slacken and deadening her way for some minutes at least; and louder yet were the sounds of gratulation and of triumph, when the latter, observing the manœuvre, ran suddenly close to wind, and being enabled by the smallness of her size to run much nearer to the shore than the sloop, soon left her lumbering far upon the lee. But the interest of the spectators was excited to a far higher degree when our friends in the hooker, after calculating with a precision which experience enabled them to use, the difference in the speed of both, formed the hardy design of sailing round her foe, and thus combining utter and absolute disgrace with discomfiture. She watched her opportunity well, and taking as much "odds" as she thought would secure her triumph, she suffered her sails to fill, loosened the main-sheet, and put the helm a little to windward. The sloop perceived her insolent intention and attempted to baffle it by a similar procedure. Finding that she was not making sufficient way, however, she struck out a reef, at the risk of some perilous "heeling." This was a measure on which the hooker had not reckoned. She persevered in her undertaking, nevertheless, and swept across the bow of her rival so closely that the next plunge of the latter divided the froth which shone in the hooker's wake. Her triumph was complete, however, and the shout which her crew raised as she bounded freely over the breakers to the

leeward, was answered from shore to shore by the boatmen of the surrounding vessels, who had watched the rather perilous assay with an intense interest.

While sports like these were used to checquer the tediousness of their river voyage, (tedious to them from their perfect familiarity with all its magnificent details of scenery,) they were making rapid progress up the stream. They had now passed the islet of Scattery, with its round tower and eleven churches—the ruins of which may be all comprehended in a single *coup d'œil*—a little spot which has been immortalised by the legend of St. Senanus, and by the sweet melody which our national lyrist has founded on the same subject. The sun was now fully risen, and as the vessel approached the Race of Tarbert, where the river dilates to the extent of several miles, and assumes the appearance of a considerable lake, the most agreeable opportunity was afforded to the voyagers of appreciating all the varieds plendours and changes of this celebrated stream. On the left was the bay of Clonderlaw, an opening of some miles in extent, where the red and ruffled waters presented, to a considerable distance from the shore, on either side, a marked contrast to the dark green hue of those which ran in heavy swells and breakers in the channel of the river. On the right lay the villages of Tarbert and Glyn, (the hereditary domain of the far-famed Knights of the Valley,) while the undulating face of the surrounding country presented an appearance of sunny richness and cultivation, which rendered the scarcity of wood, (the only void by which the eye could have been otherwise offended in glancing over the prospect) scarcely, if at all, observable. The wide surface of the Race was covered with innumerable vessels of all kinds—brigs, ships, (as three-masters are here emphatically termed) schooners, sloops, turf-boats, and hookers. The heavy sea, which ran in the centre, rendered it rather a dangerous passage to the small craft, and many of them were observed lowering their peaks and run-

ning to the anchoring places near shore—while others, with sails reefed close, and presenting, from the height of their turf lading, the appearance of a lighter with the bottom upwards, struggled on slowly, battling their way by inches against the heading wind, and steeping three rows of the turf which covered the leeward gunwale in the heaving brine. Now and then a huge porpoise was seen rolling its black and unwieldy bulk above the surface of the waves, in its hungry pursuit of a terrified salmon (a fish in which the river then abounded, though the weirs which have been since erected, and the clattering and noisy Limerick steamboat have rendered them much more rare at present)—and at longer intervals, the head of a seal, which had come up from his peaceful solitude in the river's bed to look about him and see how the world was going on, floated along the surface, like (to use a similitude of our friend in the hooker) "a sod of handturf."

They passed the perils of the Race, and entered a narrow, and less boisterous channel, celebrated by a feat executed by a knight of Glin, similar to that of poor Byron at the Dardanelles, running between two rather elevated points of land in the counties of Limerick and Clare, where the wood was more generously scattered over the soil, imparting an air of greater finish and improvement to the numerous seats which were within sight, and harmonizing well the many ruins that lifted their ivied and tottering bulk on the eminences in the distance. Farther on, the Shannon again dilated to a breadth of several miles, affording a view of a hilly but cultivated country, on the shores of which the waters formed numberless creeks and petty peninsulas, studded with cottages and old castles, and ornamented on the Clare side by an oak wood of considerable extent, which skirted the anchorage of Laba Sheeda (the *silk bed*,) a favourite road for the weather-bound shipping. The night fell before the hooker arrived at the Gut of Foynes, which was her resting-place for the night, and the final destination

of two of her crew—the brown-coated passenger, and his companion, or master, in the cabin.

The night was too dark and stormy to admit of our friends landing with any convenience, so that the genteel politician was compelled, sorely against his will, to avail himself of the smoky shelter of the already crowded cabin, until the dawn. This was not long in arriving, and the sun arose on a scene as still and breathless, as if the elements, exhausted by the labours of the preceding day, had agreed to celebrate a Sabbath. While the passenger was occupied in getting his companion's luggage safe to shore, the latter walked slowly up toward the bold and jutting point of land called the Rock of Foynes, which overlooked a scene that was dear to him from many associations, and which, for these reasons, and for its own beauty, the reader will permit us to sketch, while we wait the approach of some new incident. He stood on a road which appeared to have been cut out of the side of a solid rock, of a clumsy nature, and presented, as far as the eye could reach on either side, one of the finest highways that could be formed—as level, and nearly as broad as a Macadamized street in the British metropolis. At his back, the Rock ascended in, at first, a perpendicular and then a sloping form, covered, in its crevices and on its summit, with heath and wild flowers. At his feet, a suddenly descending earthy cliff, unchequered by the slightest accident of vegetation, walled off the waters of the Shannon, and presented a well marked contrast to the green and undulating surface of the small islet of Foynes, which formed the eastern shore of the Gut, and looked gay and sunny in the morning light. At the base of the cliff, the waters of the Shannon now lay hushed in a profound repose, as if the genius of the stream, who had yesterday filled the air with the sounds of his own giant minstrelsy, were now lolling at leisure and conning over the song of a summer streamlet. A wide glassy sheet of water, on which a few dark-sailed boats floated idly in the dead calm, lay between the cliff

and the north, or Clare shore, which again presented an abrupt and broken barrier to the silent flood, and in others fringed its marge with a rich mantle of elm and oak wood. Blue hills, cottages (which filled up the landscape not the less agreeably that they were the abode of sickness and of misery) formed an appropriate distance to this part of the landscape. Further on the right lay the dreary flat of Ahanish, and further still, a distant prospect of a wide, barren, and craggy country, the limestone surface of which was baked and whitened by the summer heat. This rather unfavourable portion of the scene, however, was so distant as not to affect in any degree the general air of richness which formed the fundamental character of the landscape.

"Why thin we travelled far, sir, to see places in foreign parts that worn't anythen to that for beauty," was the reflection of the humbler of the voyagers, as he sidled up, noiselessly, behind his companion, and contemplated the scene over his shoulder. However disposed the latter might be to admit the justice of the observation, the uncouth phrase in which it was couched did not appear to please him, for he turned aside with an abrupt and fretted "psha!" and walked up the road.

"If he hasn't any raison himself, he might hear to it from another," said Remmy (for it was no other than he) discontentedly; "it's like the dog in the manger. He hasn't but little brains of his own, and he won't let anybody else use them any farther than he can."

At this moment the attention of both was attracted by the appearance of a handsome tilbury at the turn of the rock, which drove rapidly towards them. Before they had time to observe the rank or quality of the travellers (a lady and gentleman), a startling incident, very strange and unaccountable to the new comers, though of fatally frequent occurrence in this quarter of Ireland at the period in question, interrupted their speculations. A shot, glancing from the hill above the rock, grazed the person of the gentleman

who held the reins, and glancing off the little Scotch coped parapet near Remmy, cut with a rushing sound through the calm bosom of the river. A shrill halloo of mistaken triumph at the same instant rang through the peaceful scene, and Hamond, looking up, saw on the summit of the hill, gazing on the spot, and standing in dark relief against the blue morning sky, the figure of a man, his long crane neck extended to its full length, his enormous hooked nose looking like the beak of an eagle uplifted over his prey, and his long, thick, white hair thrown straight backwards, as if he had been (naturally as well as morally) all his life running against the wind. Perceiving his error, he used an action of disappointment, and disappeared. Hamond turned his eyes again on the tilbury, and perceived that although Providence had saved the travellers from one danger, they were not yet free from its no less perilous consequences. The horse, terrified by the report of the gun, had set back several yards, and turning its head toward the cliff, began, in spite of all the exertions of the driver, who had cause enough for alarm already, to back rapidly towards the precipice. Remmy, starting from the stupor into which he had been thrown by this unruly welcome to his native land, ran quickly towards the travellers and succeeded in seizing the reins just as the wheels had gained the little footpath on the verge.

"Fool and dolt," said Hamond, contemptuously, as Remmy assisted the portly driver to dismount, and aided him in arranging the harness. "How he bows and cringes! He touches his hat and fawns, as if he were the rescued wretch himself—as if he had not given that pompous, pampered thing, his very existence. It is so all over the world. In every corner of the earth, the same degrading tyranny is exercised. The rich persecute the poor—and the richer the rich. The proud insult the humble, and they too have their insolent superiors. Ha! he tosses him a piece of money. It is thus that the services of the poor are always valued.

No matter what the sacrifice may be—of personal safety—of toil—of health—of heart's ease and all self-interest, the highborn ingrate thinks he is more than quit of all obligation, by flinging an atom from his hoards, to the real owner—flinging it too as that man did, at his feet—not to be taken from the earth without defiling his fingers."

The tilbury at this moment drove up, and Hamond, although he had purposely turned aside from the road, for the purpose of avoiding them, could see that he was closely observed, by both the lady and her friend, whether that in their fright they took him for one of the assassins, or recognised him for his real self, he could not conjecture.

"O murther, sir!" said Remmy, as he ran toward his master with open mouth and eyes—"did you ever see the peer o' that? In the broad daylight—and the open street—maken no more o' you, than ov you wor a dog, just. We'll be kilt, fairly, sir, in a mistake. Sure there I was meself shot—dead—with a bullet in the middle o' me brains, within—only just you see that it barely—barely—missed me."

"Why did you delay so long after you had done all that was necessary?"

"I'll tell you that, sir. Why did I stop so long? She axed me—no—not me, naither—but when I was just putten up the bearen rein—the lady—'pon me word, sir, she is a spirited little woman, I declare she is now—the man was twice as much frightened as what she was—I couldn't help admiren her in me heart, she took it so aisy—A party crathur too I declare. But as I was sayen, she hid her face from me in her veil (though I know 'twas handsome be the sound o' the voice) and whispered to the gentleman (be the same token he made me a'most laugh, he was in such a flurry—calling me 'ma'am,' and 'my dear,' and sometimes 'my lord'—being fairly frightened out of his sivin sinses—the poor man. He's a magisthrut, it seems. and not over an above quiet, for which raison one o' the lads

comes down to have a crack at him from the rock, as if he was a saagull—though I'll be bound he isn't air a *gull* at all, now); but as I was sayen, she whispered the gentleman, and he turns to me, and says he, 'Isn't your name Jemmy Alone?' siz he. 'Not Jemmy, but Remmy,' siz the lady (I declare I never thought me name would sound so sweet) —'Tis plase your honour, m'am,' siz I. So she whispered the gentleman again, an' says he to me—'Mr. Salmon, your master,' says he, 'where is he?' Well, I thought I'd drop down laughen, whin I heard him call your honour Salmon. 'He's no such odd fish as that indeed, sir,' siz I, 'but such as he is, there he is appozzit uz on the road over.' So they druv away, the two of 'em. The gentleman is a Scotchman, and I don't know who can the lady be. He thrun me something, for a *ricompince* as he called it. I suppose *ricompince* is Scotch for one-an-eight-pence."

After having with subdued impatience listened to the whole of this tedious harangue, Hamond dispatched his servant to the Castle for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements before his arrival, telling him that he would saunter on slowly over the hill, by a path which he remembered from his boyhood, so as to reach Castle Hamond by noon.

"How selfishly and vainly," thought Hamond, after Remmy departed, "has all my long life been spent, and what would be my answer if that shot had (as it might well have done) taken in this weak head or wicked heart in its course, and sent me to hear the great accounting question—'In how much mankind had been the better or the worse for my sojourning amongst them?' Let me, as I have lived so totally for myself hitherto, endeavour, before the sun goes down, to fulfil even a portion of my neglected duty to others. Let me, since my own hope of happiness in this life is now for ever and for ever ended, endeavour to forget its sorrows, and occupy myself only in advancing that of others—for happiness is a gift which a

man may want himself and yet bestow. I have seen enough of the world to know that even if I had succeeded in all my youthful wishes I should *not* have succeeded in satisfying my own wants. If I had married Emily Bury (he paused, and pressed his hand on his brow as the thought suggested itself to him) I might be now mourning over her early grave. Is it not something that I know she yet lives—that she treads the same earth—breathes the same air, and is warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as Hamond is? Let this content me. Let me not risk the small share of peace which remains to my heart by forming new attachments (new? alas!)—rather, I should say, by indulging the memory of the old, since the 'covenants of the world' are sure to die. Let me rather fondle and indulge the impulses of a generous benevolence, which the action of my selfish sorrow has so long retarded within me, and let my fellow-creatures be dear to me for his sake whose wish it is to be loved through his own bright creation, but not superseded by it. And where should I find objects worthy of such care, if not in my own impoverished and degraded country? My poor, humble friends! why did I ever leave your simple cottage circles—your plain, rough, natural manners, and kindly, though homely affection, for the tinsel of a world that has deceived and disappointed me—the glitter and smiles of a rank that has decoyed and scorned me, and the false-hearted seeming of a love that has left me but a bruised and heavy heart, a loaded memory, and a sapless hope for the even-tide of my life."

He was interrupted by some person's plucking his coat skirt, and addressing him, at the same time, in a voice which seemed to be rendered feeble and broken by disease or exhaustion. "Somethen for the tobacey, plase your honour, and the Lord in his mercy save you from the sickness o' the year."

Hamond turned round, and beheld a countryman,

middle-aged, as it appeared from his dark and curling hair, although his squalid, worn, and ragged appearance might otherwise have left the matter in dubiety. Our hero, who had been absent from home sufficiently long to forget nearly all the peculiarities of his countrymen, was not a little surprised to hear this poor fellow, who seemed about to perish for want of the common necessaries of life, petitioning for what appeared to him a luxury.

"Something for tobacco!" he repeated; "why, my poor man, you seem more in want of bread than of tobacco."

"A little o' that same would be no hurt, plase your honour, but we can't expect to have everything."

"What is the matter with you?—why do you walk so feebly?"

"The sickness goen I had, sir."

"What is that?"

"The faver, plase your honour," said the man, staring at him with some surprise. "Indeed, I'm finely now, thank Heaven, but I think 'twould be a great strengthener to me, inwardly, if I had the price o' the tobaccy, it's so long since I tasted it."

"Do you live in this neighbourhood?"

"I do, plase your honour, in regard my wife and two c'ilder (poor crathurs!) has the sickness, above in the field, an' I couldn't remove 'em a while. Heaven is merciful, sir, an' only for it, sure what would we do? for we hadn't anythen at all, an' the people (small blame to 'em, indeed, for it) wouldn't coom a-near uz, in dread o' the sickness (being taking), until Miss O'Brien, the Lord be good to her, gev uz a ticket for the male, an' soom money an' other things, an' she'd give more, I b'lieve, if she knew I had more than meself il', an' that we wor wit'out a roof over uz, which I was delikit of tellen her; for 'twould be too much to suppose we should all of uz have enough, an' what no one is born to, hardly, except he was a gentleman."

"Let me see where you live," said Hamond, "if it is not very far out of the way."

"Only a *small* half mile, plase your honour. I can't walk only poorly, but your honour is good, an' the place isn't far."

While they proceeded along the path through the fields, the man gave, at Hamond's desire, a short account of the circumstances which had reduced him to his present condition, which, as they are in themselves interesting, and present a tolerably faithful picture of a Munster cottage life, we shall venture to transcribe.

CHAPTER IV.

As for *abstinence*, or *fasting*, it is to them a *familiar kind of chastisement*.—CAMPION'S *Ireland*.

"WAS it always the same case wit me as it is now? is it, your honour is axen me? Ah, no, sir, that would be too bad; I had my pleasure in me day, as well as others, and indeed, I have no raison to complain, considering, thanks be to Heaven! and if I had only praties enough to keep above ground for a few years more just to *make my soul** (a thing I was ever too negligent of), I think a prince couldn't be better off. Do you see that large field over-right uz, sir? Whin I was a *slip* of a boy, about eighteen or that way, that was a great place for the Robertstown an' Shanagolden girls to come, blachen their coorse thread, an' bekays they should lave it out all night, they used to stay themselves watchen it, (in dread it should be stolen off the wattles) in the summer nights, tellen stories an' *crusheening*† away till mornen. At the first light then, the boys o' the place would come with fiddles an' flutes, and there they'd be before 'em. Kitty O'Brieneen with her

* To attend to his religious duties. † Gossipping.

hundhert o' thread, an' Nelly Kilmartin with her hundhert o' thread, an' all the rest of 'em with their hundherts, blachen, an' then the *keoyh** would begin—dancen, an' joken, an' laughen, an' singen, till it was broad day. Well, of all the girls there, Kitty O'Brien was the favourite with the boys, seeh a sweet smilen crathur! though, indeed, myself didn't think very bad† of her, till one mornen axen her to jine me in a slip jig; 'She's goen to dance wit a better nan,' says Batt Minahan, that was very sweet upon her the same time, an' I knowen nothen of it. 'She'll go farther than the field, thin,' says I, 'for he isn't here any way.' 'He is,' says Batt, 'standen out before you,' siz he. 'Is it yourself you mane?' siz I, looken down upon him. ''Tis, to be sure,' siz he. ''Twould take another along wit you to be able to say it,' siz I. Well, whin two foolish boys come together, an' a woman by, 'tis but a short step from words to blows. Batt an' I tackled to ('m sure small blame to him, an' the sweetheart listenen), an' we cuffed, and we bate, an' we kicked, an' we pulled, an' we dragged one another, till there was hardly a *shreed* o' clothen left upon our backs, an' the boys med a ring for uz, and they hullooen, and the girls screechen, and the whole place in one pillilu! An' then we pult the wattles out o' Kitty's thread, an' we big'n wattlen one another over the head an' shoulders, till the sticks was broke in our hands. Well, it was the will of Heaven I got the upper hand o' Batt that same time, an' bet him, an' pummelled him, till I didn't lave him a leg to stand upon—an' then I danced the slip jig with Kitty. Well, I never thought much o' Kitty before, but my heart warmed to her after I fighten for her, an' we wor married agen next Advent. Batt (an' sure small blame to him) never could bear the sight o' me after. I lost a little by it, too, for I *was thinken* of another girl before that, a girl that had as good as fifteen pounds of her own—but she wasn't a patch upon

* Fun. † Very highly.

Kitty for manners an' beauty. Little I thought I'd be one day taken yer honour to see that same Kitty, stretched in a dyke, on the broad of her back, in *the* sickness—but Heaven is merciful, an' we'll get her out of it again I hope. 'Twould delight your honour to hear Kitty's cry—she had the best cry in the parish."

"The best cry?

"Yes, sir, for an 'ollogone,' or 'ullilu! after a funeral, or at a wake-house. When Kitty had one glass o' sperits, jest to clear her *vice*, you'd wonder to hear her. Besides, Kitty had a very fine *back*, an' the other girl hadn't air a *back* at all, nothen to spake of."

Hamond, who was himself a connoisseur in female proportions, entered with a readier sympathy into his companion's admiration of this latter quality than the preceding one, but was again benighted when the other went on with his encomium.

"Indeed, I had but a very poor back myself at the same time, an' I could hardly open my mouth or say a word any where in regard of it. So I tuk Kitty's *back* rather than the fifteen pound forten, an' then I had as large an' as fine a *back* as air a boy in the county—then who daar cough at me, or tread on me coat in the puddle? None—for Kitty's *back* stood by me always, at fair or market."

"My good fellow, I can hardly understand you. It seems you thought the larger Kitty's back was the better."

"To be sure, sir."

"And then you had no back at all yourself—"

"Till I married Kitty, sir—"

"And then you had as large a back as any body? What am I to understand from this, if you are not amusing yourself at my expense? what do you mean by your back?"

"Back!—Faction, sir—faction for fighten. Is it I to be funnen your honour?"

"Oh," said Hamond.

"Well, sir, we married, as I told your honour, an' if we

did we got a small bit of land, very snug, and had a lase of it, an' got on very well for a few years, an' a couple of crathurs with uz, an' we wor finely off with plenty o' praties, an' milk now an' agen, but that was too good a story to last, and the big'nen of our troubles came on. This was the way of it. The owner o' the estate that we rinted the cabin from had a fine bog within about three miles from us, an' he wanted us, and all the tenants, to cut our turf upon it, an' not upon a bog belongen to another man liven a-near uz; but then we hadn't the mains o' drawen it such a distins, an' not being in our lase, we didn't do it. He didn't forget this for uz (indeed I don't blame him either, considering)—but he couldn't get a vacancy* at uz for a long time, for we took care always to have the difference o' the rent agen the gale day any way. Well, sir, at last what do you think happened to uz? The minister that lived in the same parish, was made agent to our landlord, an' so when we went to pay our gale, what does he do but take his own tithen out o' the rent I brought him, an' hand me back the rest, sayen, 'Here, me good man,' siz he, you're onder a mistake—the rent is 5*l.* more, siz he (five pound being his own tithes). 'Well,' siz I, 'I nevur seen the peer o' that for—' 'For what?' siz he. 'Nothing,' siz I, but I said, 'roguery,' within me own mind. 'Give me the rent,' siz he, 'or I'll eject you.' 'Let me go for it,' siz I. 'How far have you to go?' siz he. 'Something farther,' siz I, 'than I'd trust *you*.' 'How far is that?' siz he. 'Just as far then,' siz I, 'as I could throw a bull by the tail.' Indeed, I did, sir, say it to him. Well, he never forgay me that word.

"When I came back with the rent, he wouldn't have it at all, right go wrong. 'Very well, then,' siz I, 'if you don't like it, lave it—you can't say but I offered it to you.' An' well the rogue knew the same time, that the offer wasn't good in law, inasmuch as there wasn't air a

* An opportunity of revenge.

witness to it, an' I knowen nothen of it at all, till Johnny Doe coom down upon me, an' let me know it when it was too late. Well I nevur 'll forget the day, whin poor Kitty, and the childer, an' meself, wor turned out, with the choice of taken a bag on our back, or listing, whichever I liked.* An' that's the way it was with uz sence, ramblen over an' hether about the country, ont'l this summer, when the womaneen tuk ill in *the* sickness, an' the crathurs along wit her, an there was an end of the whole biziness, when I got it meself—an' the four lyen ill together, without one to mind uz, ont'l the priest was so good as to have the little hut made over uz wit a foew sticks and some *scraws*,† and straw onder uz, so that we wor quite comfortable—and thanks to the neighbours, wor in no want of potaties, an' male moreover, (that they say the English sent uz over)—a thing we didn't taste for many a long year before—signs on we're getten over it finely—an' I think if I had a pe'north o' tobaccy, I wouldn't ax to be better, moreover, when I see so many more worse off than meself in the country. Here's the place, plase your honour."

Hamond had heard much, during his residence in England, of the misery which was at this time prevailing in his native country—he had read many of the popular novels of the day, which had made Ireland and Irish suffering their scene and subject; but allowing a latitude for the ancient privilege of story-tellers, he was totally unprepared to find their representations actually surpassed by the reality. He beheld in the ditch before him a shed (if it could be called so) not high enough to admit him without creeping on all fours, and so small, that the person of poor "Kitty" occupied nearly the entire length. It was formed in the manner described by the wretched owner, in the hollow of a dry ditch, with a few sticks placed by way of roof against the top of the next hedge, and covered with sods of the

* Begging and listing, are the usual alternatives in Munster.

† Thin sods of green peat

green turf. One end of this miserable edifice was suffered to remain open, and through this aperture Hamond was enabled to take cognizance of a woman half clad, and two children lying on a heap of straw, moaning heavily, either from pain or debility. The hot splendour of a summer sun crisped and dried the short grass upon the roof about their heads.

"Is it possible," said he, "that your nights are spent under no better shelter than this?"

"Oh, what better would we want, sir, this fine weather, praise be to heaven? Indeed, the first nights we wor worse off, for we slept in the open air, an' the heavy dews at night kilt us entirely, an' we haven nothen but boiled nettles to ait. So that we ought to be very thankful to heaven, an' after to the neighbours, that wor so good as to make this snug little place for uz. Well, my darlen, how is it the pain wit yon, an' the wakeness? See here's a fine gentleman coom to see you an' the crathurs, darlen o' my heart."

"The Lord be good to him for so doen, Dunat; 'tis better with me."

"Well, heaven is good, Kitty, an we'll be soon all well an sprightly agen, plase God."

A low sigh was the only answer to this consoling prediction. Hamond, touched no less by these indications of tenderness and affection in natures so unpolished, than by the misery which made them necessary, placed in the hands of his guide all that was wanted for present purposes, promising at the same time to take care for their future condition as soon as he should arrive at Castle Hamond. The poor people overwhelmed him with thanks and benedictions —and "Dunat" (as the old woman called her husband) insisted on conducting him farther over the hill.

"There's Bat Minahan's house over, sir," said he, pointing out a neat white-washed cottage. "It was a lucky day for Bat, the mornen he come off second best wit me.

He gev up fighten, and married the girl with the fifteen pounds, an' signs on there's the way he is, an' here's the way I am. An' there's the field I fusht met Kitty. I declare, sir, I never go by that field of an' evenen, but my heart is as heavy as lead, and I feels as lonesome as anythen you uvur see, thinken of ould times an' things."

"Well, my good man, keep up your spirits, and it may be as well with you as with Bat Minahan yet. But I would advise you to make as little use of your *back* as possible."

"Oh, back or front, your honour, it's a long time since there was anythen o' that kind in the country, plase your honour. Quiet enough the fairs an' the wakes is now, sir. Their courage is down these days."

They parted—and Hamond, as he passed over the field, heard this strange, though by no means singular specimen of his country's wretched, improvident, and yet light-hearted peasantry, endeavouring, though with a faint and husky voice, to hum over "The Humours of Glin."

As he walked along the more frequented part of the soil, Hamond had opportunities of appreciating the full extent of the misery which the misfortunes of the preceding season had occasioned, and which excited so lively an interest at the same period among the almost proverbially benevolent and generous inhabitants of the sister island—for even an Irishman cannot withhold this portion of their praise, whatever cause he may have for angry feeling on other subjects. Numbers of poor wretches, who seemed to have been worn down by the endurance of disease and famine to the very skeleton, were dispersed through the fields, some of them occupied in gathering nettles, the common food of the people for a long period, and *prishoc* weed from the hedges, for the purpose of boiling, in lieu of a more nutritious vegetable. The usual entreaties, and their accompanying benediction that "the Lord might save him from the sickness o' the year," were multiplied upon his path as he pro-

ceeded. The red crosses which were daubed on almost every cabin-door as he passed, and the sounds of pain and sorrow which came on his hearing from the interior, afforded him a fearful evidence of the extent to which the ravages of the disease had been carried—a disease attended by a peculiar malignity in its application to Ireland; for it was seldom fatal in itself, but merely disabled the unhappy countryman (whose sole hope of existence depended on his being left the use of his arms) for a few weeks, until the season for exertion had gone by, and then left him to gasp away his life in the pangs of the famine which was consequent on his involuntary remissness. The tillage, except where the indications of unusual wealth and comfort showed that it was the property of a considerable holder, bore marks of haste and negligence, and altogether the general appearance of the country was affected in no light degree by the misery of its inhabitants.

Hamond could not avoid feeling a pang of deep remorse when he compared his own fanciful miseries with the real and substantial wretchedness which stared upon him here at every step he walked. He felt his cheeks burn with shame when he recollected how many of these poor beings might have been made happy for life with the wealth which he had wasted in endeavouring to banish from his memory an adventure of comparatively very trivial importance, and he hurried to escape from the stings of self-reproach, which the real criminality of his conduct occasioned, by resolving that every moment of his future life would be occupied in retrieving the occasions of duty which he had hitherto omitted. It was decreed, however, that he should before long have deeper cause to regret the time which he had misspent.

We shall leave him, however, for the present, and follow Remmy O'Lone, who has ere now arrived at his mother's cottage. Thanks to some remittances made by himself, and to Hamond's patronage, it was a more comfortable

establishment than many which he had encountered on his route, and he smiled with the pride of gratified affection, as every indication of rural comfort presented itself successively before his eyes.

"Why then, I declare, the old 'oman isn't getten on badly for all!—The *bonureen*,* and the little goslens! an' the ducks, I declare! an' the——no 'tisn't!—Iss, it is—'tis a cow, I declare! Well, see that, why! Fie, for shame the old 'oman, why does she lave the doore open? I'll purtend it isn't meself that's there at all, till I have one little *rise*† out of her."

With this design he adjusted his hat to an imposing cock, buttoned his brown coat up to his chin, thrust both hands under the skirts behind, and so strutted forward into the open door with what he intended for a royal swagger. On the floor of the kitchen sat a child about three years of age, playing with a pair of jack-stones, who did not appear at all pleased by the intrusion. Perceiving that no one else was in sight, Remmy judged that the speediest means of procuring attention was by awakening some alarm for the infant. He therefore squatted himself on the floor and made a hideous grin, as if he were about to swallow the little fellow up at one bit. The roar which the latter set up at this strange menace quickly brought two women from an interior room; but Remmy was on his legs again, and as demure as (to use a popular similitude) a dog at a funeral before them! The elder of the females dropped a low woman-of-the-house courtesy to Remmy, who acknowledged it by a condescending nod and a smile of patronage.

"Your little lad, here, thought I was goen to ait him, I b'lieve, my good 'oman."

"Strange, he is, sir—O fie, Jemmy, darlen, to screech at the gentleman! Will your honour be seated?"

"Thank you, thank you, honest 'oman!" said Remmy, with an affable wave of the hand, and then laughing to

* A little pig † Equivalent to the London *luck*.

himself as he passed to the chair (the hay bottom of which the good woman swept down for him with her check apron) —"*My* honour! Well, that's droll from the old mother!"

"I'll be wishen you a good evenen', Mrs. O'Lone," said the young woman who was with her. "Come along, Jemmy."

"Good mornen to you then, an' tell Miss O'Brien I'll be over wit her to-morrow surely. I expect 'em both now every other day, tell her." The woman and child departed. "I ask your honour's pardon," the old lady continued, turning to Remmy, who was endeavouring to keep his risible muscles in some order,—"may be you'd take somethen, sir, after the road?"

"No may be at all about it. Try me a little—it's a maxum o' mine never to refuse."

"From foreign parts, I suppose, sir, you are?" said Mrs. O'Lone, after she had enabled Remmy to amuse himself in the manner indicated.

"Yes—I'm an Englishman born and bred," said Remmy, with admirable effrontery, trusting that his mother's ignorance of dialects would not enable her to detect the very lame assumption of the British accent which he used.

"If it wasn't maken too free wit your honour," said Mrs. O'Lone, after hesitating for a considerable time, while Remmy busied himself with a dish of *crubes*,* "since 'tis from foreign parts you are, sir, may be you'd meet a boy o' the O'Lone's there."

"There! Where, my good woman?"

"Abroad, plase your honour."

"Many's the place that's abroad, honest woman. If you hadn't a better direction than that goen looken for a man, ye might be both abroad together for a century and nevur coom within a hundhret miles o' one another—ay, two hundhret, may be."

"Shastone†! wisha! It's a large place, sir."

* Pettitoes † An exclamation of surprise.

"But talken o' the O'Lone's, I remember meeten one o' them in me travels—Jeremiah O'Lone, I think—"

"Iss, sir—or Remmy, as we used to call him, short—"

"Short or long, I met such a fellow—and being countrymen—"

"Countrymen, sir! I thought your honour said you wor an Englishman."

"Eh, what? an' so I am, honest 'oman, what of that? It's true I was born in Ireland, but what hurt? No raison if a man is born in a stable that he should be a horse."

"Sure enough, sir. But about Remmy, sir, you wor sayen that you knew him."

"I did, an' I'll tell you a secret. If I did, I knew as big a vagabone as there is from this to himself."

"O dear gentleman, sir, you don't say so?"

"What should hinder me? 'm sure 'tis I that ought to know him well. He was the worst innemy I uvur had.

"May be he had raison?" said Mrs. O'Lone, her tone of respect gradually subsiding into one of greater familiarity, as her choler rose and her fingers wandered in search of the tongs.

"The bla'gaard, what raison would he have to me? An idle, theiven, scamen rogue, that'll coom to the gallows one time or other."

"Your honour is maken fun o' me, bekays you know that 'tis his mother that's there."

"Are you his mother, poor 'oman? I'm sorry for you."

"May be if I wanted your pity, you wouldn't be so ready wit it."

"Well," said Remmy, "I heard a dale of Irish manners, but if I'm to take that for a speciment——"

"You'll get the worth o' what you bring. I see what you are now, you unnait'rel cratur!"—said his mother, rising from her seat—"I asked you to a sate by the widow's fire, an' a share o' the widow's male, an' there's my thanks,

abusen and poll-talken* o' the poor lad that's far away, and that if he were here, would pummel you while uvur he was able to stand over you, you contrairy cratur!"

"He wouldn't," said Remmy, coolly.

"He wouldn't!" replied Mrs. O'Lone, lifting the tongs.

"Would you strike me in your own house?" said Remmy, as the blow was about to descend over his eye.

The old woman seemed to hesitate between her desire of vindicating Remmy's good name, and the obligations of hospitality which held her hand. At length, flinging the utensil into the chimney-corner, and throwing herself, with a wild burst of grief, into the chair, "I'll lave you to Heaven!" said she—"If it wasn't for that word, I'd make you that you wouldn't be so free wit your tongue. 'Twasn't a gentleman ever done or said what you did. 'Tis like your frightenen the child a while ago, you crule man you!" And here, unable to continue her invective any farther, Mrs. O'Lone lifted her apron to her eyes, and indulged herself in an unrestrained fit of sobbing and crying.

"Ah, now, see what this is!" said Remmy, touched by the too great success of his *ruse*. "I never saw you for a woman, that there can't be any fun wit you, you're so soft. Come here," relapsing into his natural tone—"throw your hands about me and kiss me, you old fool, and sure you ought to know Remmy before now."

With a shriek of delight and astonishment, his mother flung herself about his neck, and overwhelmed him with caresses.

"Easy now—that'll do, mother: take your hands o' me I tell you, an' sit down there an' be quiet, an' let me finish my dinner. One would think you wor goen to make a male o' me."

By a great effort, Mrs. O'Lone commanded herself, and taking a seat opposite to Remmy, remained gazing at him, as if there were anything at all fascinating in his ill-favoured

* Backbiting.

countenance, while he gave her an account of his master's intentions with respect to his future residence in the country, and his desire that his nurse, Minny O'Lone, should come to live at Castle Hamond.

Minny seemed to be made rather thoughtful by this proposition. She mused a moment, and then taking her blue rug cloak from an old panelled chest behind her, and pinning a clean white kerchief over her head, she bade Remmy to wait half an hour for her, while she stepped over the fields to Mr. Falahee's, to speak one word with a lady that was lodging there, after which she would be ready to accompany her son to the Castle.

"'Twill be a hard thing to bring about," she said with herself, as she crossed the fields alone; "and still, poor dear, if it was a Turk that was there, they couldn't but do all in their power for her. Indeed, to say the truth, it's little admiration she should be afeerd to go near him."

For several weeks after his return Hamond persevered in the strenuous practice of the resolution which he had formed on his return to his native land. The dawn of the morn beheld him in the fields, on his way to the bed-side of some suffering tenant, where he was accustomed to spend whole hours, when the number of his afflicted dependants was not so great as to claim a briefer division of his time. Like all enthusiasts, his fervour, in the new course which his smitten conscience had suggested to him, was pushed to a degree of indiscretion which might have made its endurance questionable, but for its connexion with another feeling which time did not seem likely to remedy. The more Hamond saw of the misery and of the dispositions of the impoverished classes of his countrymen, the more that dislike of the wealthy and high-born, which had constituted the disease of his mind for many years, was irritated and increased; and (without seeking maliciously to detract from the merit of his benevolence) we might say, that the poor benefitted nearly as much by his resentment

to their superiors as by his compassion for themselves. They, however, were unable to estimate his motives, and their blessings and their gratitude were unreservedly poured forth at his feet. The family who were fortunate enough to attract his attention on the morning of his arrival in an especial manner found occasion to rejoice in his bounty; and, tainted as his motives were by a hue of self-gratification and want of the unlimited charity which comprises friends and foes with indifference, and totally overlooks, if it does not sometimes contravene, the impulses of mere personal feeling, Hamond soon discovered that even the bounded and selfish generosity which he exercised was a surer means of acquiring habits of contentment and quiet feeling than any effort to distract his attention from the sorrows of his own soul by amusement addressed to the senses. The peculiar habits of the people, nevertheless, occasionally gave him a great deal of annoyance. One scene, which took place during a visit which he made to a sister-in-law of Dunat (who was now become a snug steady cottager), may furnish the reader with a general idea of what those annoyances were.

"Well, Dunat," said Hamond, as he entered the girl's sick room, and perceived the patient considerably worse than he had left her on the preceding evening, "was the doctor with her to-day?"

"He was, please your honour, an' indeed he didn't seem over and above plased."

"Why so?"

"Upon her head, sir, he wanted to put it—a blister that is—an' he toult the women to have the hair cut off, for it was the head-ache entirely that was killen her."

"And has it been done?"

"No, plase your honour, the women say 'twould spoil her for a corpse!"

"How do you mean?"

"To have the curls tuk off; and besides, he was very

angry in regard o' the linen. To have it changed he wanted, sir, but they haven't only the other pair clane, and they want to keep them agen the wake."

"What wake?"

"Her own wake, sir, if it pleased Heaven she went."

"Inhuman wretches!" Hamond exclaimed aloud. "Is it possible that you were calculating the circumstances of her funeral, while she was yet in the balance, and ready to sacrifice the chance of her life to your own abominable vanity? Let the directions of the physicians be complied with this instant."

"O sure if your honour likes it, 'twouldn't be wishing to us for a deal to refuse you, sir," said Kitty, "but it was the girl's own wish as much as the rest."

To his unutterable astonishment, Hamond found that this was the fact. He remained, however, to see that his wishes were complied with in effect, and departed in a humour more meditative than usual. He regretted, nevertheless, the violence with which he had spoken to the poor people; for it was evident that the feeling was general, and his common sense told him that the means which he used would not be the most successful in removing it.

On the third day after this, Hamond had a better opportunity than ever of estimating the misery of his poor countrymen; for he lay himself locked fast in the leaden chains of the heavy and wasting pestilence which rioted in the land.

CHAPTER IX.

I, that loved her all my youth,
Grow olde, now as you see;
Love liketh not the falling fruite,
Nor yet the withered tree.
For love is like a carelesse childe,
Forgetting promise past:
He's blind, or deaf, whenere he list:
His faith is never fast. —*Percy's Relics.*

TIED down as he now was to the mournful solitude of a sick bed, Hamond was no longer able to amuse the enemies

of his peace (his own memory and imagination), by fixing his attention on other subjects. His brain was enfeebled by the influence of the disease, and less calculated to resist the illusions which, independently of any pre-existing cause in Hamond's own mind, the alteration of the system alone would have occasioned. The hallucinations to which he soon became subject invariably connected themselves with the reigning melancholy of his mind, and became more striking and vivid according as his disease proceeded. The manner, too, in which real and imaginary events and objects were blended in his mind afforded matter for curious speculation, which the growing infirmity of his head did not hinder him from indulging. A few instances may enable the reader to comprehend our meaning, if (fortunately) his experience may not have made him already acquainted with it.

He had, on one occasion, fallen into a broken and heated slumber, in which he remained for some hours, dreaming of Emily, of her husband, and of her friend; placing the head of one upon the shoulders of another, and imagining all the fantastical changes which the despotism of a fevered fancy could suggest. He beheld his successful rival (for his success *had* reached his ears) lying dead, as he had been taken from the field to which some political quarrel had called him, (for this, *too*, Hamond had heard, though as yet the reader remains unacquainted with the circumstance), while Emily bent over him in all the agony of real sorrow. Hamond contemplated the scene in silence for a few minutes, until it faded gently from before him, and he awoke with a burning thirst. It was nearly dark, and Minny O'Lone, who was his nurse, had left a floating light upon a small table near the bed-side, dropping the curtain so as to shade his eyes. He could perceive that some person was seated at the table.

"Minny!" he said, faintly. The person moved, and presently he heard a bell ring. A few moments elapsed while his thirst became almost torturing.

"Minny, is this the way you treat me? Have you left me like all the world? I am dying of thirst,' he murmured in a feeble voice, while his heart was filled with anger.

The curtain was slightly drawn, and a hand was presented to his view, in which was a cup of whey. He drank it, and the hand was withdrawn. In a few moments after, Minny drew back the curtain, and took the vessel from him.

"Minny," said he, as he looked on her withered and bony hand, "it was not you handed me that drink."

"Not me, darlen child! O, what else, sir?"

"Why did you not speak or look in upon me?"

"Getten it ready, may be. I was, sir."

"You rung the bell, Minny. For whom? Or who rung it?"

"For a token to Remmy, sir, to have the *seed* o' the fire ready for me."

Hamond was silent, rather because the weakness of his frame disqualified him for sustaining the inquiry, than because the explanation of Minny perfectly satisfied him.

On the following evening, the window of his chamber being thrown up by the physician's desire, to admit the freest possible circulation of air, Hamond awoke from another fitful slumber, to open his eyes on a red and cloudy sunset. He gazed, as he lay on his back, through the window, and full upon the broad blood-coloured disk of the luminary, as it slowly sunk below the horizon, while large masses of thick black clouds were gathered, in rocky fragments, about and above, as if ready to topple, and close, and crush it. All the objects in the chamber were tinged with the disagreeable light, and Hamond's eyes were pained at every attempt to turn them away, at the same time that he could not close them altogether—for when he did so, the balls felt as if they were burning beneath the lids. Strange and fearful figures (such as poor Fuseli would have suffered any night-mare to be blessed with the sight of) darted rapidly upon his vision, and vanished as quickly.

At one time he fixed his eyes on a wrinkle in the curtain, and felt as if that were the cause of all his suffering. A wind stirred it, and he fancied that an earthquake was shaking the whole world to pieces about him. In the midst of the many spectres that presented themselves with nearly all the vividness of reality before him, one in particular, which stared upon him from a fissure in the hangings, rivetted his attention. It was that of a female face, pale and wasted—with dark hair and eyes moist with tears—one hand holding the handkerchief which was tied around her neck, and the other putting back the chintz-hanging from before the face. This appearance did not change so speedily as the others, but vanished altogether when Hamond moaned in the excess of his debility. All the exertions which he afterward made were insufficient to bring it before his eyes.

On another occasion, when his disease approached its crisis, the sound of his own guitar, coming, as it seemed to him, from a remote part of the building (an old pile almost worn out in the service of the family from whom Hamond's uncle had purchased the property) threw him back in imagination upon the days when he had sat by Emily's harp, to hear her sing those lines which he was fond of adapting to the ancient music of his native country. While he continued to indulge these recollections, her voice at length came back upon his memory so clearly and sweetly, though still dreamily distant, that he was enabled to trace one song (a little melody of the *suantraighe*, or sleepy mode, which we are told was formerly used by the national bards to lull the wearied warriors to rest in their chambers,) through all its cadences. The words too sounded in his memory—he could almost fancy upon his ear. They were as follow:

I.

Sleep, that like the couched dove,
Broods o'er the weary eye,
Dreams, that with soft heavings move
The heart of memory—

Labour's guerdon, golden rest,
Wrap thee in its downy vest;
Fall like comfort on thy brain,
And sing the hush-song to thy pain!

II.

Far from thee be startling fears,
And dreams the guilty dream;
No banshee scare thy drowsy ears
With her ill-omened scream;
But tones of fairy minstrelsy,
Float like the ghosts of sound o'er thee,
Soft as the chapel's distant bell,
And lull thee to a sweet farewell!

III.

Ye, for whom the ashy hearth
The fearful housewife clears—
Ye, whose tiny sounds of mirth
The 'nighted carman hears—
Ye, whose pigmy hammers make
The wonderers of the cottage wake—
Noiseless be your airy flight,
Silent as the still midnight.

IV.

Silent go, and harmless come,
Faires of the stream—
Ye, who love the winter gloom,
Or the gay moon-beam—
Hither bring your drowsy store,
Gather'd from the bright lusmore:
Shake o'er his temples, soft and deep,
The comfort of the poor man's sleep.

Before the last stanza had faded on his ear, Hamond was falling rapidly into a slumber as profound and salutary as that described by the melodist. The night passed away before he woke, and when he did so, he found that the usual salutary change had taken place in his system.

"If you'd excuse me spaken to you, sir," said Minny to him a few days after, when Hamond was able to sit up in the bed and converse freely, "I have somethin to say that I wouldn't witout your bidden."

"Say on, Minny," said Hamond, rather amused by the thoughtful manner in which she prepared herself for the conversation, whatever it might be.

"Why then, I will, sir, sence you desire me," said Minny. Then seating herself by the bed-side, and turning the tail of her cotton gown over her shoulders, she went on. "You're as dear to me, Mr. Hamond, an' I think worse of you than I do of my own a'most, for I nursed ye both together, an' if I did, sure I was well rewarded for it. But what's troublen me, sir, ever sence you tuk ill, is to spake to you about goen to your duty, if it be long sence you done it. You know, Master Hugh, dear, how relligious your family wor ever an' always—an' your poor mother herself, heaven be merciful to her, was pious an' good—so 'tis kind for you to look to yourself that way. Forgi' me, Master Hugh, af I make too free, but I declare it's for your good I am, an' I couldn't rest in peace thinken of it, while you wor so ill; but now the Lord has given you a safe deliverance, praise be to His holy name, an' you ought to turn to Him and to thank Him, an' to think of Him, and try an' make your peace with Him for all you ever done, for I'm afeerd entirely, Master Hugh, that you worn't witout goen astray an' neglecten Him in foreign parts. Forgi' me, Master Hugh, if I'm maken too free."

Hamond, really affected by the tenderness and earnestness of her manner, as well as by the uncouth way in which she started a subject that had long lain dormant within his own bosom, though the blush of self-accusation which rushed into his cheeks showed that its embers were not extinguished, assured her with much warmth that he felt grateful for the kind interest in his welfare which her discourse manifested.

"I declare it makes my heart glad, sir, to see you so willing, for there's always great hopes that way. Go on, sir, an' with the blessing of heaven your bow will be green, as they say, before long."

"How do you mean, Minny?"

"An old fable, sir, that they invented as a good morl about a great penitent that was there long ago, but you're too wake now to hear it."

"Not at all, Minny. I feel quite strong since I took the chicken broth. Say on, whatever it is."

Minny accordingly complied, and as her little tale furnishes a good specimen of the *naive* ignorance and strength of thought which are frequently combined in those legends, we are tempted to transcribe it for the reader's information.

"A couple, Master Hugh, that had a son that used to get his living *soft* enough by stalen an' doen everything that was *endeffe.ent**—an' his father an' mother could get no good of him, for he bet 'em reg'lar when they talked to him about his doens. Well, he went to the priest of his parish coming on Aister, an' says he, among other things, 'I bet my father an' mother,' says he, 'as often as I have fingers and toes,' says he. The priest looked at him, 'Have mercy on you, you unfo.tunate man,' says the priest, 'how come you to do that? Go now—for I can't take you,'† says he, 'unt'l you get the Pope's apinion, an' accorden to the apinion he'll give of you, I'll take you or not,' says the priest. Well an' good, if he did, the boy went an' told his father an' mother, an' to be sure they made a great *lava*‡ about his goen to the Pope. Well, he got up airly next mornen before his breakfast, an' he set off to the Pope, an' a long road he had to travel before he got there. When he did, an' when he set foot upon the Pope's ground, every bit of it beg'n shaken onder him. The Pope was sitten in his parlor the same time, an' he knew be the ground shaken that it was some bad member

* Wicked.

† Receive you into the Church. The reader will find an explanation of the practice alluded to by Minny in the Evidence on the State of Ireland before the late Parliamentary Committee.

‡ Lamentation.

was comen to him. 'Run out,' says he to his servant, 'an see what poor cratur is it that's comen to me,' says he. So the servant done his bidden, an' see the boy comen along the ground on his bare knees, an' he brought him before the Pope. 'Erra, you poor creatur,' says the Pope, 'what's the raison o' your comen that way to me?' says he. 'The priest that sent me, plase your reverence,' says the boy, 'to have your apinion o' me for bating my father and mother as often as I have fingers an' toes.' 'If you done so,' says the Pope to him again, 'you're in a bad way,' says he, 'an' I can't give any apinion of you,' says he, 'ont'l you go to the wood an' get a withered tree an' go an' stand with it in the middle of such a river,' says he, 'an stay there ont'l your bough is green again,' says he. 'O murther,' says the boy, 'an' sure I'll be dead before half that time,' says he. 'I can't help you,' says the Pope, 'I can't give any apinion of you till you bring me the withered tree again.' Well an' good, the boy went to the wood, an' if he did he got a withered tree, an' went an' stud wit it in the middle of the river, waiten till it would get green with him. Well, one night, in the dead hour o' the night, when he was standen there, two highwaymen passed by, an' they driven a couple o' heifers before 'em. So one of 'em see this boy a one side in the dark under the withered tree. 'Who's there,' says he? There was no answer. Well, 'Who's there?' says he again, 'or I'll put the contents o' this through you,' says he, liften his gun. 'Oh, go along wit you,' says the boy, 'an lave me alone,' says he, 'to do my penance.' 'What harm is it you done?' says the highwayman. 'I bet my father an' mother as often as I have fingers and toes,' says he, an' so he up and he told him uvurythen; 'an' I'm waiten here now,' says he, 'ont'l my bough'll be green again,' says he. 'Murther alive!' says the highwayman, 'sure many's the time I bate my father,' says he, 'an' worse than that, 'says he; 'an' here,' turnen to the other highwayman, 'take the cows and

the gun,' says he, 'for my heart is changed, an' I'll have nothen to do wit you or your doens any more!' says he. Well an' good, he went to the wood, an' if he did, he got a withered tree, an' he came an' stood by the boy. Well, Master Hugh, in less than twenty-four hours after, the highwayman's bough was green, bekays he repented of his own accord, when the grace of heaven came on him, an' the other boy was there a twelvemonth before his tree was green, when his penance was accepted an' he was free again."

Although Hamond was not one of those estimable characters who can find "sermons in stones, and good in everything," (we request that this overworked apophthegm may never be quoted again,) he found matter for deep reflection in the quaint legend which Minny furnished him with, and which evinced a deep-seated and delicate sense of religious worth, a quality of which the poor peasantry are but little suspected. Happily for Hamond, his conscience had not as much to reproach him with in act as in omission, and he found the less difficulty in following up Minny's suggestion in the course of his convalescence. He found the immediate benefit of the exertion in a return of an almost infantine quietude and serenity of soul, which if it did not wholly and instantly uproot the poisonous herbage which had overgrown and overshadowed his spirit for many years, at least cut off the evil humours which fostered and encouraged it, and relieved him from the responsibility of wilful spleen against his fellows.

For several months after, Hamond continued, but in a calmer manner than before his illness, to administer in every way that his fortune (unencumbered though moderate) enabled him to use to the comfort of his unhappy neighbours, and had the satisfaction of seeing the condition of all around him daily assuming the appearance of contentment, and that competence which constitutes the natural and legitimate expectation of every member of the humbler classes, and the

strength of the entire country. He was not a little grieved nevertheless, to find that the common prejudices of the people, on the subject of high birth and family, ran, in direct opposition to his own feelings, and that his services, generous and open-hearted as they were, lost something of their influence on the minds of those on whom they were conferred, by their recollection of his own humble origin, which made him appear almost as one of themselves—a feeling which on occasion they did not hesitate to express. This, however, was among the least of the many mortifications which poor Hamond had experienced in the course of his life, and he made up his mind to endure it without much difficulty. Neither was his affliction extreme at finding the usual ceremonial which a stranger or absentee looks for on his return from a long absence, or his occupation of a new residence, neglected by the gentry, in his neighbourhood. Nobody visited him, but that was not the cause for which his heart was pining.

He might, nevertheless, have worn out in peace the remainder of his life (now falling a little into the "yellow leaf,") if it were not for an unexpected incident which intruded fiercely upon his solitude, and brought back all his miseries upon his heart in greater force than ever.

He was sitting in his apartment in the afternoon of a cool November day, musing over the turf fire, which the already sharp frosts rendered agreeable, when Remmy entered the room, with a face of unusual mystery and importance, to say that a strange gentleman was below, who wished to see Mr. Hamond. "Mr. Hunter he says his name is, sir," Remmy added, and then speaking in a whisper, and with a face of deep wisdom—"'Tis the very Scotchman, sir, that I caught his horse when he tuk head at the Rock o' Foynes."

Hamond remembered the name, as that of the gentleman to whom Emily's friend Martha O'Brien was betrothed when he was in Dublin, although that gentleman being then

in his native country, Hamond had no opportunity of knowing him personally. The sudden appearance of a person, even thus distantly connected with the history of that unhappy period of his life, agitated him in no inconsiderable degree. It was some time before he could command himself sufficiently to bid Remmy show him up stairs.

Mr. Hunter introduced himself in a gentlemanly modest way; referred with a delicacy, at which even Hamond's critically sensitive heart could not take exception, to the circumstances which seemed to warrant him in seeking Hamond's acquaintance; and apologised for having so long deferred his visit, the interval having been wholly occupied by the efforts which he had made to discover the fellow who had fired on him from the rock.

"I *have* caught the ruffian at last," said he, "though that very circumstance only renders my own chance of safety from similar attempts the more questionable. This, however, is but a very insignificant episode, in the dark and bloody history of the fearful and silent system of rebellion which is fast spreading through the country. I am looked to with a peculiar dislike, as I happen to be one of those who exclaimed against the immortal pusillanimity of the Round Robin, which was signed by the magistrates of this county, at the beginning of the disturbances."

"Indeed, I heard of that abroad," said Hamond, "and blushed for my native Limerick."

"'Twill never be done again," replied Mr. Hunter—"and it was then rather the result of indolence than actual fear. However, peace be with politics! let us talk of something else. You have some fine paintings there."

"A few," said Hamond.

"That is a good copy of Poussin, only (if my memory serve me right,) a little more *papery* than the original."

"I have heard it said (for I am no critic myself,) that that was a general fault of poor Barry's colouring. You see I am a patriot in my pictures."

"All fair, sir, all fair. I like Barry myself. But if you're fond of historical paintings, I should recommend you to look at some of Allen's. Ah, sir, that will be a brilliant fellow —you'll see."

Hamond, while he could not avoid smiling at this piece of nationality in his northern friend, promised to avail himself of his suggestion, on the first opportunity.

"That is a *bonnebouche* over which you have the green curtain drawn," said Hunter.

"Only a portrait," said Hamond, in a careless tone, blushing deep crimson at the same time.

"Now that you talk of portraits, sir," said Hunter, suddenly recollecting himself—"you remind me of a commission which my wife gave me, when she knew I was coming to see you. There is a cousin of hers lodging in your neighbourhood, at Mr. Falahee's, a Miss O'Brien——"

"I have heard of her," said Hamond, "but I had no suspicion that she was a relative of Mrs. Hunter's. Even the identity of the names had escaped my recollection. She had a fever lately, I believe?"

"She had—almost immediately after your convalescence. It was a most extraordinary circumstance how she could have taken the contagion, for though she was attentive to the people about her, she never went in danger of the disease. However, she has, it seems got some message for you, which she longs to deliver in person."

"From———from whom?" Hamond asked, hesitatingly.

"From a friend of ours, with whom she spent a considerable time on the continent. Excuse me, my dear sir," he added, laying his hand on Hamond's arm, as he observed his head droop suddenly, and his cheek whiten—"I am intruding strangely on matters of so deep an interest to you, but I am a mere agent—yet no cold one either."

"Pray, do not use ceremony with me," said Hamond, still trembling with an agitation which he could not com-

mand. "Talk of Lady Emily and her friend, as you would of indifferent persons. My heart is interested in what you said, rather from a long and bad habit in which I indulged it, than from the positive existence of any strong feeling, one way or another."

"Since you permit me to use the privilege of an old acquaintance already," said Hunter, "I will tell you that Lady Emily, after the death of her husband, of which you must have heard" (Hamond bowed)—"expressed in a letter which she wrote to my wife, a strong wish to see you—in order to explain some mistake, which had at the first occasioned the misunderstanding that led to your separation. That wish she again expressed, more recently, to our friend Miss O'Brien."

"I understand you," said Hamond, with firmness, "but my answer to this is brief. When Lady Emily rejected me, and married another, she exercised a deliberate judgment, and I did not seek to obtrude my vexed and disappointed feelings upon her. I forgive her sincerely—fully—but I never will—never can, see or speak to her."

"And yet you forgive her! Ah, my dear friend, that is not the language of forgiveness. It is not the forgiveness which is required from us, in return for the pardon which we all need for our own transgressions. How would you feel, if when you solicited that pardon from the Being whom all offend, more or less, the answer returned from the seat of mercy, were, 'I forgive you—but I never will see you—leave my paradise for ever.'"

"Your rebuke is just, Mr. Hunter—but admitting that it is so, of what use could it be to renew an acquaintance that would only bring back intolerable recollections to both parties? Our hearts and our persons are both changed now. I suppose I should scarcely know Emily, nor be known by her. For myself, I am conscious that the world and my own—ill temper, perhaps—have altered me strangely; and where Emily might expect to find some remains of the warm

and enthusiastic nature that she once said she loved, she would only be shocked to meet a dark and morose temper, a furrowed cheek, and broken spirit in her old love. Let us not meet, then, to give pain to each other. We are not very far, perhaps, from the close of all our anxieties; let us then steal quietly from the world. Let us not vex the fallen evening of our days (since fate has made us hurry through our noon) with storms which are only the right of youth and youthful passion."

"If you knew the circumstances under which she expressed her wishes," said Hunter gravely, "it would not be so difficult to prevail on you."

Hamond looked keenly into his eyes. "You are aware," the other continued, "that her health had been suffering for many years?"

Ever ready to anticipate the most gloomy posture of affairs, Hamond now listened with a suspense approaching to agony. Hunter too seemed to pause, as if affected by some unusual emotion.

"The fact is," he resumed, "part of my commission is conditional; and as I have the liberty of reserving it to myself, in case you should consent to come and see us, I am anxious to prevail on you—for it is of a nature that I had rather trust to other lips than—" Hamond here interrupted him.

"If all this, Mr. Hunter," said he, speaking in a hoarse low voice, and almost sinking with apprehension—"if this has been only a preparation to let me know that Emily Bury is——that the worst possible calamity in this world has befallen me—it would be better, perhaps, that the conversation should rest here."

"I will only confine myself to my commission," said Hunter. "Our cousin has a message for you."

"I understand," said Hamond, endeavouring to command himself while he gazed on the other with an absent and

dreadfully ghastly eye. "I thank you, Mr. Hunter—you have discharged your part well and feelingly."

"I will not leave until you promise to meet Miss O'Brien at our place."

"I will, I will, but not now—O, not now."

"In the next month then?"

"Be it so," said Hamond, rushing out of the room.

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed Hunter, as he rode away, "it will be a long time to keep him in pain—but the women will allow nobody to meddle with matters of this kind but themselves."

CHAPTER X.

> If thou be'est dead, why dost thy shadow fright me?
> Sure 'tis because I live; were I but certain
> To meet thee in one grave, and that our dust
> Might have the privilege to mix in silence—
> How quickly should my soul shake off this burthen?
> —*The Night Walker.*

We now find ourselves in the position in which our tale commenced, when, as the reader may remember, we left Mr. Charles Lane seated at Mr. Falahee's fireside, and expecting the entrance of their fair lodger. In a few minutes the lady made her appearance, prepared for the excursion which she meditated, and in a very few more, she and Mr. Lane were on the road leading to the house of Mr. Hunter, where she proposed spending the remainder of the day.

Whether it was that the lady did not feel pleased with her company, or that she had some secret cause for anxiety, her young squire observed that she was more, far more than usually meditative after they left the house—so much so, as on two or three occasions to have paid no attention to observations which caused him no slight degree of labour in concocting. They rode by Knock Patrick (a hill which

is said to rise by a *gradual* ascent from Dublin), and he pointed out to her with his switch the chair of rough stones, near the ruined church, in which the great patron, Saint Patrick, had rested, after his apostolic toils, including all the western district, in one general benediction—he showed her the well at which the holy man had nearly escaped poisoning, and related at full length the legend of the Munster Dido, the foundress of Shanet Castle, a singular and striking fortification, which occupied the whole summit of a craggy hillock towards the south. But all his eloquence was in vain. Miss O'Brien said "no" when he expected her to say "yes," laughed when she ought to have been shocked, and used an exclamation of really appropriate horror or compassion, when politeness should have made her laugh at some piece of barbarous joke-slaughter. He was perfectly satisfied, nevertheless, that this inattention could not be the result of pride in Miss O'Brien; for though she was no favourite of his, he always remarked an almost too acute anxiety in her manner to avoid the slightest possibility of giving pain by any assumption of superiority. Indeed, she sometimes carried her condescension to an extent that young Lane would have thought a step too low for himself, and was very careful to observe and acknowledge, with the ready sweetness which is so peculiar to high rank and intellect, the homely courtesies of the poorest peasants that passed her on the road. Mr. Lane, too, was quicksighted enough (although he *was* a kind of blockhead in his own way) to perceive that this eager humility was an assumed or engrafted portion of the lady's character, and that her natural temper was directly opposite to it.

They parted, at length, at Mr. Hunter's door (the young gentleman not half satisfied with the impression he had been able to make of his own cleverness on the lady's mind), and Miss O'Brien entered the house of her friend. The lady of the house was alone in her drawing-room.

"Welcome, a thousand, and a hundred thousand Irish welcomes, my own darling friend," she exclaimed affectionately, as Miss O'Brien entered. The latter endeavoured to speak, but could only fling her arms about Martha's neck, and weep loudly and bitterly.

"Is he come?" she at length asked, in deep agitation.

"Not yet—but we expect him every hour. He renewed his promise most earnestly yesterday evening."

"Oh Martha, I fear I have miscalculated my firmness. I could find it in my heart to turn back this moment, and run into some secret place, and die at once, and in silence. My heart shudders when I think of what I have undertaken."

"Ah, now, what weakness this is, my dear friend!—'Tis but an hour's exertion, and consider what peace of mind it will purchase you. For the sake of my poor friend Hamond too, I would advise you to sacrifice your own feelings as much as possible. Do, now, love!"

"I will, Martha—but I fear—I know how he must feel. However, I will try to exert myself."

They remained silent for a few minutes, Martha Hunter (we take the liberty of retaining the familiar appellation of her youthful days) holding Miss O'Brien's hand between both hers, and turning towards her a face which was filled with the sweetest interest in the world—a face in which the sedateness of the mother and the wife had not, in the slightest degree, overshadowed the beaming affection of the girlish enthusiast—a face as clear, open, and serene as a summer forenoon, which had never felt any stormier changes than that with which it was now gently clouded—the grief of ready sympathy for a dear friend's woe. But Martha had passed through life without a care or disappointment of any serious kind.—She was born to a moderate fortune—she met a young gentleman whom she liked for a husband, and she married him—she longed for children, and she had them—two fine

boys—then she wished for a girl, and a girl appears—every thing, in fact, had run on so limberly with her, that if it were not for some rogue's tearing down her garden fences on one occasion for firing—and that the drawing-room window was three inches too high to enable her to see the Shannon from the sofa, she might be said to be a happy woman.

To judge, however, from the appearance of the lady who sat next her, the reader, though he has yet heard little of her personal history, had not, hitherto, been in any great danger of pining from an access of good fortune, like the merry Widow of Cornhill. The autumn of a once brilliant beauty yet lingered in her face and form—but it had that air of sudden and untimely change, which shewed as if the causes of its gentle decay had been accidental rather than natural. The contrast in the expression and appearance of both countenances was such as a painter, fond of lingering on the pictures of female lovliness and interest, might have seen with a delighted eye.

While both remained thus silent and motionless, indulging the long caress in the mute intelligence of old affection, they were suddenly startled by a knock at the hall door, Miss O'Brien rose from her seat.

"Do not be alarmed," said Mrs. Hunter, "perhaps 'tis only Hunter."

"Oh, it is he, Martha—the very knock—that hesitating knock—how often has my heart bounded to it!—but 'tis over—All is over now!"

"Be comforted, I entreat you."

"They have opened the door," Miss O'Brien added, grasping Martha's arm hard, and putting back the curls from her ear—"I hear him—stop! hush!—" she listened and bent forward in an agony of attention—"'Tis—'tis he—that voice—though more sorrowful in its tone—Oh, Martha, I can never do it! Oh hide me, my dear friend, cover me—let me fly any where rather than meet him!"

"My darling—ah, my own darling, take courage," Martha exclaimed, flinging her arms around the neck of her trembling friend, and mingling her tears and caresses. "Will you give all up now, after whole years wasted in preparation. What will Hunter say to you," she added cheerfully, "after the great fib you made him tell?"

"There again, Martha—what if he should revolt from that cruel deceit! He will do so—I am sure—and the breach will be made wider than ever."

"How can you think so hardly of him? Have you no claims, then? Am I not your confidant, and do I not know your secret services, your kind anxieties, and your long suffering last summer in consequence?"

This last reflection seemed to inspire the trembling lady with a greater portion of confidence than she had hitherto felt, and she followed Martha to her dressing-room in some degree of composure, where her fair friend disencumbered her, with her own hands, of her riding-dress, and the Leghorn hat with silk handkerchief plainly tied over and fastened underneath the chin, which formed the then popular, and, to our taste, graceful substitute for the round hat commonly used.

We will leave the ladies to prepare, as well as they may, for this meeting (which seems to be such a terrible affair, whatever the reason of it is), while we return once more to Castle Hamond, the proprietor of which was preparing with no less anxiety for the promised interview with the last friend of his once loved Emily—his first and last affection. This true lover had led a wretched life from the day of Mr. Hunter's visit; and all the exertions of his religious and philosophical mind were insufficient to suppress the rebellious sorrow that laboured at his heart. The change that had taken place in his person, as well as in his mind, may, however, be most easily indicated, by introducing the reader into his apartment, as it appeared when Remmy O'Lone

entered it, kettle in hand, on the morning of this very day a few hours after the Wren-boys had departed.

Hamond was then seated at his solitary breakfast-table, in the same dress which we have seen him wear on board the hooker—a blue frieze jacket and trousers, with a black silk handkerchief tied loosely about his neck—his hand clenched fast, and supporting his forehead, as he leaned upon the table. He suffered Remmy to make the tea, lay the toast, and go through all the necessary preparations, without seeming to be once conscious of his presence. When he raised his head, at length, in order to answer a question put by the latter, the appearance of his countenance was such as made Remmy start and gape with horror. His eyes had sunk deep in their sockets, while the lids were red, and the balls sullen and bloodshot—his lean and rather furrowed cheeks had assumed the pallid yellowness of death—his forehead and temples were shrivelled, dry, and bony, his hair sapless and staring, like that of a man wasted by disease—his lips chipped and dragged—and altogether an air of desolation and anxiety about him, which nothing less than a luxurious indulgence of long sorrow could have produced. His voice, as he spoke to Remmy, was rough, harsh, and husky, and the sharpness and suddenness of his manner showed as if his mind were in some degree shaken by the continuance of painful and laborious reflection.

"I will *walk* there," he said in reply to Remmy's question. "Leave me now, and do not come until I send for you."

Remmy left the room.

"Yes!" said Hamond, starting up from the table and making the door fast. "I will meet this envoy. A dying message—or dying gift, perhaps. No matter! Inhuman as she was, I can't forget that I have loved her—and her last thought and her last present will be dear to me, for they can never change. Oh, Emily, why did you wrong yourself and me so foully? When all the world left you

—when you were lying on your death-bed in a foreign land, did you remember old times? did you think of Hamond and his injuries with regret? and if so, why was I not apprised of your repentance? why was I not kneeling at your bed-side, to comfort the spirit that I loved with the words of forgiveness and affection? But no!" he added, stamping his foot against the floor, and setting his teeth hard in a sterner mood—"Let me not fool my nature. She died the death she earned for herself—the death of the proud and the high-hearted. Let me rather rejoice that it is so—for in her grave alone could she become again the object of Hamond's love. I could not tell her, living, as I now tell her dead, that her image is still treasured among the dearest memories of my heart—that Emily Bury, the young, the gay, the tender, and the gentle, is still the queen of that blank and desolate region. "My heart is worn, Emily," he went on, raising his outstretched arms as if in invocation of some listening spirit—"its affections are grown cold—its passions, all but this undying one, are blasted and numbed within their dens, its earthly hopes are withered, and all its sources of enjoyment broken up—yet even there you have not ceased to govern. The interval of many years of gloom has not yet banished from its deserted chambers the influence of your sunny smiles—the echo of that voice that poured comfort on it when it was wounded and torn by the haughty insolence of the worthless world around you, still lingers on its fibres, and tempers the dreary voice of memory with a tone of sweetness that time and sorrow can never utterly destroy."

After pacing his chamber in silence for a few minutes, he would again stop suddenly, and with a look of absence and wonder, ask himself whether the events, that had lately chequered the solemn monotony of his lonely life with a shade of still darker feeling, were indeed all real. Dead! Emily Bury dead! Was there actually an end of all hope? Had the world lost her for ever? Should he

never indeed see her on earth again? She was cold—dead—coffined—the earth was over her—the heavy grave-stone was pressing on her light and fragile form. She was gone from him for ever and ever!

"It is past and done," said he, "and all that remains to me is to master as I may the disquietude of my own heart. This high-born friend of hers would probe and humble me—she would try me with a tale of deep interest. She shall fail. I will hear her message, and take her death-gift with a stony eye and an unmoved demeanour. I will show her, that it is not in the power of the proud to subdue the will of all whom they hold within their influence. My heart may burst within me while she speaks, but my eye and tongue shall tell no tales. I will be cold as marble—cold as Emily was—is—cold as my own heavy heart—as the grave-stone that divides us."

Having fortified his spirits in this resolution, he rose from his untasted breakfast, and with few preparations of the toilet, took his way over the fields to Mr. Hunter's residence.

It was nearly dusk when he arrived there. Mr. Hunter was not yet returned from a neighbouring court of petty sessions, where he had spent the day; and a *peeler*, in undress, who opened the door to Mr. Hamond, went to inform the lady of the house of his arrival, while he entered a neat parlour on the ground floor, which was made "a double debt to pay,"—a kind of study and sitting-room. Here he sat, endeavouring to put on a hardness, and even roughness of demeanour, than which nothing could be more foreign to his character.

His agitation, however, returned upon him with a sudden force when he heard the rustling of female dresses in the hall outside. There was a pause of several seconds when they approached the door, and Hamond could hear some whispered words of encouragement, answered by a short sigh. The door at length opened, and two ladies

entered. The light was not strong enough to enable Hamond to distinguish the countenances of both as perfectly as he might have wished; but he had not much difficulty in recognising the sweet-tempered companion of Emily Bury. Prepared as he was to act the stoic, he could not resist the winning kindness of her manner, when she walked towards him, and held out her hand with a smile of real gladness. There are some people in the world whose whole existence appears to be composed of acts, thoughts, and wishes of benevolence, and whose happiness is made up of the joys which they are able to confer on others reflected back upon their own hearts. Their very manner informs you that your presence gives them pleasure—that your happiness is sincerely desired by them—their smiles are too sweet and kind for mere acting—and the very tone of their voice seems as if it were turned to please your ear. In no country in the world do warm and generous natures of this kind abound more than in Ireland, and in no part of Ireland could one individual be found more highly gifted with it than Martha Hunter. Hamond felt his heart soften within him when she gave him her hand and inquired with an interest, which he saw was not assumed, for his health and the circumstances of his present life.

"But I must not be so selfish, Mr. Hamond," said she, turning towards the other lady, "as to gratify my own anxiety while yours remains yet unsatisfied. Another time you shall tell your old friend Martha, all that has happened to you since our last meeting. Here is my friend, Miss O'Brien, who has news for you that you are more eager to hear. You have seen the lady before now at a distance, she tells me—" Then in a low voice to her fair friend, as she felt her hand grow cold and tremble within her grasp—"For shame, darling, will you not be firm yet? Consider all that depends upon it."

Hamond bowed to Miss O'Brien. "I have had the pleasure of hearing Miss O'Brien's name frequently mentioned

in a way that was most honourable to herself—and I believe I can guess at the occasion to which Mrs. Hunter alludes. My servant was enthusiastic in his description of Miss O'Brien's heroism on that occasion."

"Oh, she is quite a little warrior, sir," said Mrs. Hunter, "but *apropos* of warriors, I think I hear one of my young rogues beating his drum a note too loud in the meadow. My absence too may relieve me from some degree of unwelcome feeling. Make acquaintance then as soon as you can, for I can tell you, Mr. Hamond, this lady is worth your knowing. Courage," she again added, *sotto voce*, to Miss O'Brien, as she passed her. "Was not that well thrown out? I will take care that nobody shall disturb you, or remain within hearing."

A pause of some embarrassment to the lady and gentleman took place when Martha left the room. The former, however, feeling the necessity for exertion, stimulated by the pressing nature of the occasion into something like self-command, and at once throwing off all mere weakness, assumed, in a few moments, an easy and natural carriage, while Hamond, remembering his own resolution, returned once more to his cold and darkly morose demeanour.

"My friend, Mr. Hunter, has made you aware, I believe, of the occasion which induced me to request the favour of this interview," said Miss O'Brien, at length.

"He has," said Hamond, calmly, "and has relieved you in some degree from what must have been a painful undertaking to one of so benevolent a disposition as I know Miss O'Brien to possess. You were the friend of Lady E—— on the Continent?"

"Pray do not call her by that name," said Miss O'Brien. "She had reason to be weary of it herself—and in my ears I am sure it is an ungrateful sound. Let us speak of her as Emily Bury, for it was only while she bore that name that I could ever esteem or love her."

"Yet you were her friend long afterward, I understand."

"Friendship is but lightly grounded that will grow cold at sight of a friend's error, particularly if that error should be followed by a punishment so severe as hers. You thought her beautiful once, Mr. Hamond, but you would have been shocked to see the startling havoc that nine years of sorrow and of sickness had made with her loveliness, before I left France. This trinket was hers," Miss O'Brien continued, handing him a small miniature set in gold. "It is the same which you returned her on the morning of your departure from Dublin, though some circumstances prevented its reaching her hands for a long time after. She wished that you would take it once more, as a token that you forgot and forgave. Look—that discolouring on the gold was made by her own tears. Does not that touch him?" she added to herself, as he took the miniature coldly, and without looking on it placed it in his bosom.

"I have long since taught myself to consider the one as my duty," said Hamond. "For the other—but, pray, let us pass to another subject. Emily and I have had but a hard life here. Her sufferings, I hope, are ended—and mine shall not be tamely fostered. I have long since discovered the secret of my own mistaken hope—and found the cure too. I have entrenched myself in this hill solitude, where I once more breathe the air of content and freedom. I hang my peace upon the humour of no high-born coquette. (You will forgive me for having learned to speak coarsely). I watch no beck. I court no smile. My heart does not, as it once did, start, like a coward's, at every sudden footfall. I walk, or write, or read the whole day long, or else sit at ease by my turf fire, and think what a happy man Adam might have been, if it were not for the rib he lost in paradise."

"Yet," said Miss O'Brien, entering freely into the spirit of Hamond's thoughts, though she could have dispensed with the politeness of the last sneer, "if it be fear that induces you to turn anchoret, there is but little merit in this

Parthian warfare. The world—the busy world has joys for the deserving as well as for the ingrate and the proud one. Why should we leave them the undivided enjoyment of those pleasures, when we might meet and share them in calm and steady defiance?"

"You should be wiser," replied Hamond, shaking his head. "You will forgive my saying that you are an enemy who must be fled—not fought with. In our strife with you we must keep our hearts out of eye-shot. You make our ears the traitors to our peace—for there is a seductive and overwhelming grace in the very music of your accents. What? Defy you? Ah, no—I thought that once, and my heart bled for it—and all that remains to me, as you perceive, is to use the privilege of a beaten gamester—to revile and tax you with false play."

"I do not know, Mr. Hamond, whether I am to take what you said as flattery or the contrary, but it has a strange mixture of both," said Miss O'Brien, who felt really a little piqued by the bitter virulence of his manner. "You say, you were *once* mistaken? Would you think," she continued more playfully, "that a general did his duty who would change his whole plan of warfare after one defeat? That is a brief experience. Besides, is it not possible that the hermit in his silent solitude, might sustain as painful a contest with the memory of the world as those who live in the midst of allurements with its real dangers? Does he not buy his safety with an enduring sameness of regret that makes those dangers look almost amiable in the comparison? Are there not moments of intolerable reflection, when contemplation puts on even a stormier hue than action itself, when the brain is almost torn asunder by the violence of its own thoughts, and the heart is oppressed almost to breaking with the memory of past social happiness, and the sense of present loneliness. Must you not sometimes sit down and think on the hopes you once cherished—the vain and f ded visions that made youth so sweet—the stirring

ambition, that even the apathy of seclusion cannot subdue? Oh, I, for my own part, should fear the solitude that was peopled by my own memory—the silence that my own gloomy fancy filled with sounds long loved and lost for ever, far more than all the mischief that the laughing world in its worst malice could inflict upon me. I am no speculator in human nature," she added, reigning in the flowing torrent of enthusiasm into which she had been betrayed, and speaking in an humble voice—"but if I have erred, your experience will set me right."

"So far from it," said Hamond, who was much struck with the manner of his fair companion—"you have told me secrets of myself, which surprise and startle me."

A pause here occurred—when Hamond, who already began to feel strongly prepossessed in favour of the lady's frankness and ready cordiality, petitioned for an ample detail of the circumstances of Lady Emily's life on the Continent, which was given with little hesitation. The conversation, as it had been long, now grew perfectly familiar, and the lady and gentleman talked as if they had been old acquaintances. The former, at length, ventured to become inquisitive in her turn.

"Pardon me," said the lady, "if I am intrusive. But you have already given me half a confidence, and it is on that I would presume."

"You will show me a kindness," said Hamond, "if you use no ceremony. Pray, speak freely."

"I know the cause of your retirement," said Miss O'Brien, after once more holding her peace for a few minutes. "Yet, if I should judge by the demeanour of Emily, and by my own heart, I should say that your state was far happier than hers who wronged you."

"Why should you think it?"

"I have played her part—and met her fate. Ay, I see," said she, as Hamond almost involuntarily moved his chair farther from her—"I see that I have already by this single

avowal forfeited the little interest which you have taken in my history. I am hateful in my own eyes, and must be so to all who know my guilt, and who cannot know my penitence."

"I beg pardon," said Hamond, "I hope—I—have no reason to form a judgment. Played *her* part?"

"A prouder, viler part than hers appears to you."

"It cannot be!" he said, with a vehemence that made her start. "You have not broken plight—you have not given your promise to one, and your hand to another. Played Emily's part! You have not deceived, decoyed, duped, and blasted the heart that loved you—that lay for years at your feet in slavish fondness. You have not acted thus. You are not a fiend, a demon—a——pardon me!" he added, suddenly arresting the loudness of his passion, as Miss O'Brien covered her face with her hands, and shrunk back in her chair. "The violence of my recollections compels me to throw aside the decorum that is due from me. I did not remember that you were her friend."

"Oh, sir," said the lady, "this is the very least that I deserve. I wish not to preserve a misplaced respect. My conscience is so galled with the burning weight of my errors—crimes I should call them—that I feel a dreadful luxury in avowing them, even though positive contempt and detestation must be the consequence. Hear me, I entreat you. Since you have learned enough to hate me, let me tell you all. For you can serve me well. You know the person I have injured."

Hamond resumed his chair in an attitude half irresolute, half attentive, while the lady, retiring still farther into the shadow thrown by the window curtains on the already darkening apartment, spoke in a tone of deep agitation.

"I was bound, as Emily was, to a young gentleman whom you know, and who, I believe, sincerely loved me. He was handsome, witty, accomplished, elegant in mind and manner—passionate, and young—but lowly born—at

least it seemed so, comparing both our fortunes. Indeed, I may truly say, that love never was deeper than his for me——"

"Pardon me once more," said Hamond, rising impatiently, "I cannot always govern myself. This is not a tale for ears like mine, that are wearied with the sounds of falsehood."

"You will not treat me so unfairly," said Miss O'Brien, using a gentle action to detain him in the chair. "Hear all that I would say. I wish not to escape your just reproaches, if you should find me worthy of them."

Hamond, chafing under the restraint, returned to his seat, while Miss O'Brien continued. "We were betrothed —bound by a registered contract, and still more by the intelligence that subsisted between our hearts—but yet, united as we were by anticipation, it was my hourly sport to play upon his sensitive nature—to awake his jealousy—to see him watch me with an anxious glance through the whirl of the ball and rout, where I had smiles and quips for all but him—and pretty sentences strung up like pearls for every ear but his—"

"Must I hear this?" said Hamond, struggling violently with himself—"Fit companions! Worthy friends! Pray, madam—let me beg—"

"I loved to see him," Miss O'Brien continued, not heeding Hamond's impatience, "when he afterwards crept to my side with a pale and fretted brow—and a gentle and reproachful eye—I loved to point out to his notice the various members of the youthful aristocracy that passed us —to speak admiringly of their wealth—their titles and high birth—"

"Hold! torture and madness!—hold!" Hamond exclaimed, starting up in a paroxysm of ungovernable fury, and flinging the chair across the room, while Miss O'Brien recoiled in terror at this unexpected burst of violence. "What! taunt him with his lowliness—with the station of

life in which the mighty Lord of life and nature had placed him? Did you tax that poor being with the will of Providence? Why do you not chide the wren that it cannot outsoar the eagle? or those dwarfish shrubs before us, that they do not uplift their boughs above that pine or oak? Shame on you! Shame and sorrow on you! In this manner was it that *my* brain was stung, even to the very verge of madness—I feel the scourges of my heart renewed—but you are not yet too late—you have not yet flung your false vile person into another's arms—your injured love may yet be sought and satisfied. Oh, fly then! fly (since you speak of penitence) return to that poor wretch's feet—you know not the misery he endures—you know not how his heart is burning and his soul darkening within him—how restless are his nights, how bitter is his food—how lonely are his thoughts—how he howls and groans in the anguish of his spirit. You know not what that anguish is. *I* do. Fly to him! Find him out! If you leave a corner of the earth unsearched, and save him not, you are a murderess! Seek him out—fling yourself at his feet—moisten the dust around them with your tears—and if his pride—his honest, injured, manly pride, refuse the amend, and he should justly spurn you in your humbleness—go then, and hide you in your shame, where the eye of man may never look upon you more, and pray that the good and the virtuous may forget you, for a blessing."

"It is a just judgment that falls upon me," said the lady, faltering, "yet I would be penitent." Then with a still more hesitating voice, "but where's the hope from that? He never would forgive me."

"Go, do your part," said Hamond, as he passed his handkerchief over his damp and heated brow—"your sin will end, at least."

"Judge——" she again faltered some seconds, "judge by your own heart, sir. If she whom you once loved,

Emily Bury—pray forgive my boldness—but if she were now living to——"

"Peace!" Hamond exclaimed sternly. Then with a graver and gentler tone, "She's in her tomb, young lady—there let her rest. Her fate is long since in His hands, in whose eye the titles and distinctions of human society are nothing more than the holiday sport of children in the thought of serious manhood. And yet, if that great change of being can purify the earthly nature, and make the soul once more white from its worldly follies, and if her spirit," he continued, raising his hands and his eyes, moist with tears, to heaven, "can read the heart it blighted—she does not see the silent agony of that heart more clearly than its full forgiveness and affection." And here, as if to compensate to his heart for the privation which he had before so coldly inflicted upon it, he drew the miniature from his bosom, and gazed long and fondly upon it, while the lady watched him with an emotion which almost bordered on tumultuousness.

"I ask not of the dead," she said, at length, looking fixedly and solemnly upon him. "I ask of that Emily whom, living, you have loved, and who, living, wronged you. Suppose she lived yet. Do not start nor wave your hand in scorn—such things have been. The grave has yielded forth its tenants, coffined and shrouded though they were—buried men have sat again beside their living friends—the sea has given its half-devoured prey to life and light once more, in a relenting mood—mothers have taken to their bosoms their children long thought dead—wives, husbands—fathers, sons. Might this not be again?"

Hamond dropped the portrait from between his hands, and remained staring on the speaker in an attitude as set and stirless, as if her eye had been Medusa's, while she continued:—

"Suppose, I say, Eugene Hamond, that Emily Bury

lived again, would your hatred revive with her? Suppose," she continued, panting heavily, and wringing her extended hands, "say that she stood before you now, here where I stand, her form thus drooped in shame and penitence, her hands uplifted thus——"

"Yes," Hamond said hoarsely, his eyes still rivetted on hers, while he spoke in soliloquy—"There *is* a meaning in those words, wild as they are. Is not earth, earth? death, death? Does not the grave-stone press heavily where it has been laid? The tomb is not so merciful. It is impossible."

"You have not answered me," said the lady, bending low before him. "Suppose that she did more than this—that she washed the earth before you with her tears—poured out the gushing penitence of her heart—and thus in her agony of sorrow——"

"Ha! hold! Stand back! Avoid me!" Hamond almost shrieked in a tone of hoarse anger and horror. "You are not she—'tis false!—Alive? What! living? Near me! Speaking with me! Once more, I bid you in mercy tell me who you are—give me but a word—a sign. My heart is bursting—speak! your name—"

"You have guessed it, Hamond, Emily!"

Uttering a burst of loud, delirious laughter, Hamond extended his arms, but his strength failed him in the action, and he staggered, groaning heavily, to a chair, while Emily, mistaking the action for one of repugnance and disgust, threw herself again at his feet.

"Do not spurn me, Hamond, nor look so dreadfully into my eyes. You have already pronounced my pardon. Do not retract your word. I have suffered deeply, Hamond—I have sought you in toil and danger—I have watched by your sick bed hour after hour—do you not know this face? Did it not ever mingle with the phantoms of your delirium? Oh, do not reject me. I will, if you desire that I should do so, leave you this instant, and never vex your sight again;

but let me for once, from your own lips, be assured that I am forgiven."

While she spoke, Hamond gradually recovered, and muttered, while he gazed steadily on her—"Merciful Providence! It is, indeed, her form—warm, living, and real! The eye is dimmed with tears, but it *is* the same—the cheek is paler and colder, but the same soft relief is there still—the same high forehead," he continued. "I have been cheated many years with a dream of misery, and here comes my early happiness, waking and bright. Reject you!" he added, as the echo of her words came back upon his memory. "Oh, let me lift you from the earth, and place you on the throne where you only have reigned as a queen since we first met—my own dark and desolate heart. My own dear Emily!" he continued tenderly, "my resentment was not so dear to me as you are. Nay—nay—no more imploring looks, you have my heart's forgiveness now."

"And I will treasure it more heedfully than your first confidence, Hamond."

"Hush," said Hamond, "I hear a footstep."

Emily turned her head and beheld Martha Hunter, holding the half-open door in her hand, and gazing with her own sweet and benevolent smile on the scene of reconciliation. When she met Emily's eye, she let the door close, and in a moment the two friends were clasped close in each other's arms.

"I owe all to you, my darling Martha, to—you and your kind husband. But this is only one act in your whole life of goodness and charity."

"Poh! poh! no speeches now. Well, Mr. Hamond, did I not tell you this lady would be worth knowing. Come now, and let us make the toilette. Hunter has agreed to take an Irish dinner for once, and is waiting for you in his dressing-room. Take Emily's arm, pray," she added merrily, as they were leaving the room—"I will dispense for once

with ceremony. That's a good boy and girl—go, and never quarrel before strangers again."

Hunter was only less delighted than his wife at the success of their common stratagem; and the evening was worn pleasantly in mutual explanations—that of the letter, and the fair hand that ministered to him (like the prince in the tale of the White Cat) in his midnight fever, not being forgotten.

"I have only one quarrel yet remaining against you, Emily," said Hamond; "and that is, that you should have trusted so little to my own sense of justice, as to suppose that any thing more than these explanations was required, to reconcile me to *all* that has taken place since we parted. But you have duped me into happiness—and I should be an epicure indeed in good fortune, if I took exception at the means. I do so only so far as my own Emily's sufferings are concerned. But I will take care to compensate to you for those. I do not know, notwithstanding the many years that have been lost, to *me* at least, why we should not still live happily. We have our experience in return for our suffering—the fervour of our youth is cooled and subdued—but there is the less danger that the flame of our affection may waste or change. We will love as well though more calmly than in younger and simpler days, and live the happier for our saddening recollections—"

"And advise our neighbours to take warning by our tale," said Emily, "and to be convinced that they can be all that true Irish men and women ought to be; that they may retain Irish spirit—Irish worth—and Irish honour, in all their force, without suffering their hearts to be warped and tainted by the vapors of IRISH PRIDE."

WHETHER the anticipations of the lovers were fulfilled—whether their old contract, so unhappily broken, was now again respected—or whether they were content to wear out the remainder of their days in the quiet enjoyment of a

steady esteem and friendship, are questions in which, probably, the reader may now have ceased to take an interest; I will intrude yet so far upon his time, nevertheless, to tell him that Castle Hamond soon became (what all Irish houses are, with few exceptions) the abode of hospitality, and (what all Irish houses, alas! are *not*) the seat of happiness and comfort. The traces of a female hand and taste soon became evident in the improved appearance of the little demesne; the hay-band no longer aspired to the office of a gate-lock—the avenue was cleared and weeded—the bundle of newspapers was no longer permitted to act as deputy for a window-pane—and the economy of the establishment was no longer so confined, as to involve Remmy in such degrading implications as that thrown out by the wren-boy at the commencement of our tale.

"My master is delighted at the thoughts of Miss Emily comen to life agen," said Remmy O'Lone to his mother, as he sat dangling his leg over the corner of the kitchen table one evening. "May be 'twould be another story with him after they're married a piece."

It was not "another story" with them, however. Hamond and Emily persevered in the benevolent course of life which both had adopted for some time before; and the condition of their tenantry, and of all the cottagers who came within the sphere of their good offices, afforded a pleasing proof of the benefits that might be conferred on even the most destitute portion of Munster cottagers by a single well-disposed resident proprietor.

Lady Emily Hamond was seated in a rustic chair, on a fine summer evening, near the gravel-plot before the hall-door, while Mr. Hamond was walking down the lawn with Mr. Charles Lane and his young wife, who were now sober, *settled* bodies in their neighbourhood. Looking on one side she saw Remmy O'Lone sidling towards her in a half bashful way—now pausing, and looking sheepishly at his toes—now pushing his hat up behind, and using more

comical actions than I have time or space to describe When he had at length approached within about a yard of his lady's side he made a grin, and with a half-laughing affectation of freedom:

"Why then, please your ladyship," said he, "if it wasn't making too free, ma'am, there was a little girl that I had a sort of a rattlen regard for—Nelly, you know, ma'am; 'tisn't living with you or anybody belongen to your ladyship still she'd be, ma'am, I wonder?"

"Oh! Nelly? she was married very soon after your master left Dublin, to a sergeant, Remmy."

"Gondoutha! Wisha an' I never seen the peer of her. That's the way of it, Nelly? Wint off wit a sodger! Very well, why——"

"Indeed she was a foolish girl, Remmy," said Lady Emily.

"Oh then—not contradicten your ladyship—not an ounce of foolish flesh was there upon her carciss. Ayeh, fool indeed! If you bought Nelly to sell for a fool you'd lie a long while out o' your money. 'Tis like all their doens—the thieves."

"Whose doings, Remmy?"

"The women, ma'am, with submission to you. Women an' pigs bate the world."

"Oh! fie, Remmy. How can you be so ungallant, so un-Irish as to say that in my presence," said Lady Emily, smiling.

"Irish or no Irish, ma'am, I speak the plain truth, an' sure 'tis well I knows em," said Remmy, stoutly. "Barring what's of 'em that's ladies, an' under proper govern mint, there isn't such rogues goen."

"Oh, fie, Remmy, I am quite ashamed of you."

"Sure I say only what isn't ladies, please your ladyship. I'd go down on my two knees to your ladyship if I thought there was any offence in me words; but as for the women o' the lower order," said Remmy, with an aristocratic curl

of the upper lip, "it stands to raison what I say, an' I stand by it."

"Oh, shame! Remmy! you a Munsterman! You should talk of them as angels sent down to guard and cheer you."

"Angels, ershishin?"* said Remmy, with a toss of the head. "Ay, angels like them that they put upon hearses —all head and wings—with gingerbread gilding—an' death under—an' sorrow after 'em. That's all the angels I can see in 'em!"

The plot of the foregoing tale is identical with that of a drama, in two acts, sent by the writer to Mr. Arnold, late of the English Opera House. Subsequent occurrences induced the author to relinquish the desire of seeking an introduction to the public through the medium of the stage, notwithstanding the kind and pressing instances of the gentleman just named. The incidents of the tale are, so far as the writer is aware, entirely imaginary, but the manner in which they are treated still bears a strong impression of the mould in which they were originally cast, and it is probable that what might have aided their effect in scenic representation has a directly opposite effect in a performance intended solely for the calm and quiet consideration of the parlour fire-side.

* Does she say?

END OF THE HALF SIR.

SONNETS—INTRODUCTORY.

I.

I hold not out my hand in grateful love
  Because ye were my friend, where friends were few;
Nor in the pride of conscious truth, to prove
  The heart ye wronged and doubted, yet was true—
It is that while the close and blinding veil
  That youth and blissful ignorance had cast
  Around my inward sight, is clearing fast
Before its strengthening vision—while the scale
  Falls from mine eyeballs—and the gloomy stream
  Of human motive, whitening in my view,
Shows clear as dew showers in the gray morn beam—
While hearts and acts, whose impulse seemed divine,
  Put on the grossness of an earthlier hue—
I still can gaze, and deeply still can honour thine.

II.

Judge not your friend by what he seemed, when Fate
  Had crossed him in his chosen—cherished aim—
When spirit-broken—baffled—moved to hate
  The very kindness that but made his shame
More self-induced—he rudely turned aside
  In bitter hopeless agony from all
  Alike—of those who mocked or mourned his fall,
And fenced his injured heart in lonely pride,
Wayward and sullen as Suspicion's soul;
  To his own mind he lived a mystery—
But now the heavens have changed—the vapours roll
Far from his heart, and in his solitude,
  While the fell night-mares of his spirit flee,
He wakes to weave for thee a tale of joy renewed.

SUIL DHUV, THE COINER.

CHAPTER I.

Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground.—*Hamlet.*

It is a very usual remark among those who pretend to be acquainted with the conditions of Irish society, that it is a land more favourable to the stranger than to the native—that the foreign adventurer finds the various avenues to good fortune which it presents less encumbered and blocked up with difficulties and disappointments, than the indigenous children of the soil; and this observation appears to be equally confirmed by experience, whether it is applied to the humble artizan who confines his hopes and prospects to the acquisition of the ordinary comforts of domestic life, or to the armed aggressor who comes to conquer and lay waste for conquest's sake alone. To endeavour, even by conjecture, to account satisfactorily for this—one of the very slightest among the anomalies of the country's polity—would lead to a disquisition on national dispositions and habits, and an inquiry into historical influences, into which we are not at present disposed to enter. The most obvious and usual cause assigned, however, is the superior industry and perseverance of the naturalized inhabitant.

One class of persons in particular have verified the observation to its utmost extent. We allude to the descendants of those emigrants from the Palatinate of Germany, who were invited over into these countries by the liberal policy

of the Whig ministry of 1708, a measure which afterward gave such displeasure in England, and drew down so weighty a censure from the succeeding cabinet of 1710. History informs us, that at this period the indigence and misery which prevailed among the disappointed aliens was such, as to occasion a not ill-founded apprehension of a contagious distemper—no less than ninety of them being accustomed to take up their abode beneath a single roof, in some of the lowest neighbourhoods of the British metropolis.*

In the sister isle, nevertheless, the exertions of the same race have been attended with incomparably better success. Unmingled and uninterested as the adventurers necessarily were with the politics and the factious prejudices of the people, and having no internal or external cause to divest them from the even course of steady and persevering industry, which their habits and inclinations suggested to them as the most likely to attain success, they were in every way prepared to take advantage of the encouragements held out to them by the landed proprietor. These were, as they still continue to be, very considerable—and this circumstance, together with the difference of religion, of disposition, and of civil habits, laid the foundation of a deep and rooted hatred and jealousy, which the moral and political changes that have, since the first introduction of the aliens, taken place in the relations of the country, have contributed rather to increase and confirm than to alleviate. The Palatines, or *Palentins* as they are more usually termed among

* The class of sufferers has been changed—but such misery as the above fact furnishes an example of, may yet be found in Ireland. In the last census for that country, no less than ninety-five individuals were returned from one house in the St. Giles's of a principal city in the west of the kingdom, and this Chinese mode of existence seems to be by no means confined to partial instances. "How many beds have ye?" asked the author once of a poor mendicant cabin-holder. "Why thin, not one but the one, sir," was the reply. "And how many sleep in it together?" "Oh! thin, only the nine of us that's in family, your honour."

their rustic neighbours, still continue to be favourites with the lords of the soil. The facility with which they obtained long leases, at a time when the great proportion of the peasantry of the country were mere cottiers to farmers, enabled them to turn their knowledge of husbandry to great account; and although their hopper-plough (which answered the double purpose of ploughing and sowing) has, I believe, generally gone out of use, their custom of producing crops in drills is still almost universally adopted. They are improving and industrious tenants—punctual, whether for the preservation of their independence, or the satisfaction of their consciences, in all their engagements—attentive, even to a degree of puritanical exactness, to their religious obligations—presenting, in the unremitting exertion which they employ in the acquisition of money, and the caution which they manifest in its distribution, a striking contrast to the people among whom they have become naturalized—(a contrast which, perhaps, as much as any other circumstance, tends to foster the contempt with which they are regarded by the latter)—precise in all that regards their domestic economy—addicted to neatness and to the appearance as well as the feeling of comfort in their houses, and imbued in heart and soul with a tincture of religious bigotry and national prejudice which enables them to return, with ample interest, the evil feelings and wishes of the low Catholic population of the country.

Assuming the above to be the general characteristics of the class we are describing, it may perhaps be added that there are many individual exceptions; but even where members of the caste are found to derogate from its usually respectable character, it is seldom, perhaps never, observed that they fall into what are looked upon as the peculiar or ruling vices of the more ancient inhabitants, and there remains as wide a distinction between the bad Palatine and the bad Irishman, as may be traced between the estimable and amiable of both classes. Like the scattered sons of

Israel, the former are careful to prevent any amalgamation of interests or affections with their neighbours, and the circumstance of an intermarriage is, to say the least of it, an exceedingly rare occurrence. People may be found to adduce this fact as one cause of the continued prosperity and happiness of the provident aliens—but a more satisfactory one may be found in the superior inducements held out to, and consequent success attending, their exertions. The Palatines, in short, are amongst those who "feed fat" upon the birth-right of their elder brethren, who are, by the peculiar policy of their governors, debarred the customary means of existence, and punished for endeavouring to devise new expedients for themselves.

Time, the great alembic by which all incongruities are reconciled and all distinctions amalgamated, has not yet exercised its customary influence on the hereditary habits and external peculiarities of the people we are describing. They still retain, even in their manners and language, as well as in their character and disposition, indications which it would be impossible to misconceive, of their German origin They are, for the most part, scattered thinly over the southern and western districts of the island—but instances are not wanted in which they form the almost exclusive population of hamlets and small villages—and where this happens to be the case, the traces of their extraction are evident and decided to a very remarkable degree.

At the time when the events which we have selected as the material for the following tale took place—in the eighteenth century—the points of distinction were, as may be supposed, a great deal more striking; and the comparative novelty of their introduction into the country, rendered them more liable than at present to the resentment of the indignant peasantry of the island, although the dislike of the latter was not more deeply rooted than at present. There was, however, a distinction. It was then the hatred of injured and excited feelings which was cherished against

the usurpers; it is now the hatred of prejudice, and of an almost excusable—at least, a very accountable envy.

We have, ourselves, found a little generalising explanation so useful and agreeable as a preparation for the introduction of characters and events in a work of this kind, that we are induced to calculate with confidence on the indulgence of our readers in devoting this short chapter to the same purpose.

CHAPTER II.

John Nobody, quoth I, what news? thou soon note and tell,
What manner man thou mean that are so mad—
He said these gay gallants that will construe the gospel,
As Solomon the sage with semblance full sad:
To discusse divinity they nought adread—
More meet were it for them to milk kye at a fleyke.
Thou liest, quoth I, thou losel, like a leud lad,
He said he was little John Nobody, that durst not speake.
—*Little John Nobody.*

A NUMBER of peasants were occupied in *trenching** a field of potatoes, in a fine soft summer evening, in the earlier portion of the last century, on the borders of one of the south-western counties of Ireland. Their work proceeded merrily—all being engaged, as is customary in Ireland, in relieving the tediousness of their monotonous labour by wild tales, and light and jocular conversation, which we shall take up at random.

"An' so you tell me Segur is off, Mick?" said one to a young peasant who worked beside him.

"He never 'll see daylight again," was the reply.

"An' how coom that?"

* Forming trenches by throwing up from between the ridges the loose earth, so as to form a fresh coat around the stalks of the vegetable as they begin to appear.

"Simple enough—be killen of 'm."

"Who kilt him?"

"Oh then that's more than I'll tell you this time—one o' the gang aistwards they say."

"An' why did they kill him?"

"Sarrow one o' me knows—bekays he was alive, may be."

"It's little hurt it was done, an' little matter who done it," said a dark-looking man on another ridge; and biting his lip hard, while he struck his spade with great violence against a large *sod*, he added—"an' the same loock to the rest of his race, an' that before long—the left-handed thieves—them Palentins!"

"You might as well be cursing, Davy."

"D'ye hear the minister?"

"Oh, it isn't from the heart that coom, any way; and them curses doesn't be heard that falls from a body's lip when they do be in a passion, and don't main what they say."

"It's done a fi'penny bit with you, now, we have a fable from Jerry on the head of it," was uttered half aside, a few paces from the last speaker—a fair-faced youth, who almost immediately verified the anticipation.

"I'll tell ye a story, then, about that very thing, if ye like to hear it," said the young fellow.

After a few jibes on the propensity of the story-telling genius, his companions proceeded with their work in silence, while Jerry cleared his voice and commenced as follows:—*

"I wonder entirely," says a most learned doctor, that used to be *there* in old times—"I wonder entirely," said he, and he going along the road—"what is the reason that the devil doesn't come upon the earth in some borrowed

* The English reader will at once perceive a striking similitude between this popular cottage legend and one of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

shape or another, and so tempt people to sin; it would be so much easier to talk them into it than to draw them by means of their own thoughts. If the devil would hearken to me, I think I could put him in a way of getting a deal that's voted to him, and that he knows nothing of." And saying this he turned off to take a short cut across the fields, the road having a great round in that place.

Passing by a little fort that was in his way, he was met by a man who came out from among the trees and bid him a good morning. He was as handsome a man as could be —only the doctor remarked him for the smallest brogues, and of the queerest shape that could be imagined.

"Heaven and Saint Patrick be with you!" says the doctor.

"Hum!" says the strange man.

"And who are you now that say 'Hum!' when I bid Heaven be with you?" says the doctor, looking down towards his heels, where he saw, just peeping out under the great riding-coat, something like the end of a hurly, curling, only very hairy.

"I am the devil," says the strange man. (Lord between us and harm!)

"I was beginning to have a notion of the kind myself," says the doctor again, eyeing the tail now very hard; but not at all put out of his way, being used to all sorts of wickedness himself from a creature up, having been once in his time a tithe proctor. "I thought no less; and it proves an old saying very true, for I was talking of you to myself just as you started up before me."

"No good, I'll be bail."

"Believe it, then. No good in the world, only harm. I was wishing that you would employ me in collecting your dues—what's yours by right only, and let us go halves in the profits."

"It's a match—give me *the* hand," said the devil. "Let us go along the road together, and whatever you make out to be mine, I'll have it surely."

Away they went, the holy pair, and they soon got out upon the high road again. As they were passing along by a cabin door, they saw an old woman standing with some oats in her apron, and she trying to entice some of her geese and goslings in to her, from the middle of a pond where they were swimming about, only the rogue of a gander wouldn't let them do her bidding.

"Why then," says the old woman, "the Diconce take you for one gander; there's no *ho* at all with you."

"There!" says the doctor, nudging his neighbour, (Lord save us!) "did you hear that?"

"Ah! my honest friend," says the devil, "that gander is a fat bird, to be sure—but 'tis none o' mine still. That curse *didn't come from the heart*, though it was sinful enough to give me power over the woman."

In a little time after, the blessed couple were met by a countryman with a little *slip* of a pig that he was driving to the fair, to make up the *defference* o' the standing gale. He had a *sugan* (hay-rope) tied about one of the hind legs, and a good blackthorn switch in his hand, and he doing his best endeavours to entice him on, but he couldn't. The pig, as young pigs will do, darted now at his side, now at that, and would run every way but the right one—until at last, he made a start right between the legs of his driver, tumbled him clean in the mud from which he rose painted all sorts o' colours—and saw the pig *skelping* along the road home, in the height of good humour.

"Why then, the Diconce take, fetch, and carry every bone in your carcase, *crubes** and all!" says the poor man, shaking himself, and turning into a meadow to roll himself in the grass, before he'd *follv* the creature home again. "Have I all my morning's work to do over again—bad 'cess to it for a story!"

"There! There!" cries the doctor.

"Not so fast," cries the devil—"that was but a slip o

* Pettitoes.

the tongue after all. The man that curst is mine, but not the thing he curst, for the heart was not concerned in it."

Well! away they went; and, in passing by a potato-field, they saw a tithe proctor *valuing* a pit o' the *cups*, and a man standing upon it, with a hammer in his hand, going to *cant* it off to some Palentins for the rent. There was a poor man standing at the road-side, with his arms leaning on the ditch,* looking at the sale of his little property.

"There's ten barrels, all going for an old song, that I raised by the labour of these hands. May the Diconce fetch all the tithe-proctors in the land, and Heaven bless them that sent 'em to us, to take the little means he gave us out of our hands—"

"Well!" said the doctor, "now you have a proctor at any rate—that was a hearty curse, I'm sure.

At this, the devil put both his hands to his sides and burst out in a fit of laughing. "Send you sense! you foolish man," said he, "if the devil had nothing else to do but to carry away all the tithe-proctors that's voted to him in a summer's-day, he'd be soon compelled to look out for a new corner to *take up* in, for they'd have all hell to themselves in less than no time."

"Whew!" says the doctor, "if this be the way with you, I'm likely to make a great deal by my bargain. Get out o' my way, you lazy gaffer," said he (growing cross) to a little boy that was sitting on a style where he wanted to pass.

"I'm no lazy gaffer, you great natural," said the lad, "and I'll not stir out of this, for you have no right to trespass on my mother's ground."

The doctor made no answer, only looked at him for a minute, and then *riz* his stick, and laid him on the ground quite easy.

"Oh, murder alive! you Turk, you killed my boy," cried

* Hedge.

the mother, who was sitting combing her wool at the cabin door. "Why then," said she, falling on her knees, and lifting up her *two* hands, "the mother's curse upon your head; and may the Diconce carry you this night, for drawing the blood of my child!"

"Come, my good man, come!" said the devil, seizing the doctor by the collar, "the favour o' your company down *lzhow*.* The mother's curse is on you."

"Oh! nonsense, nonsense! easy, easy, man!" said the doctor, "but——

Before he could well know what he was about, his friend whisked him up and about into the air,† and warm was the corner he had for him before night, I'll be your bail."

"Well, Jerry, you bate cockfighten for them ould fables; but aisy, an' tell me who are those over the hill?"

The speaker pointed to three horsemen who had just turned from beneath the projection of a small hillock, through which the wild and broken highway had been cut, and who were pushing on with as much rapidity as their ill-conditioned horses could be prevailed upon to use. The better mounted and better looking of the two foremost wayfarers belonged to that numerous class of itinerant preachers, one of whom may at this day be always discerned in fine harvest weather, hovering about the Palatine villages, and may be recognised at the distance of half a mile, jogging it softly down hill on a well-fed, fat-hammed, rough-coated pony, an umbrella tightly folded and placed in rest upon the thigh, while the smooth and glazed oil cover of his hat flashes

——"back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light—"

at the same time throwing his perhaps too jovial rotundity of

* English-Irish for *below*.

† Perhaps, the idea of connecting the *cordiality* of the curse with the workings of maternal affection, renders the conclusion of the fable, as it is here quoted, superior in point of nature, to that used by the great poet above mentioned.

countenance into a becoming and devotional shade. The specimen of the order here presented differed but little from the generality of his brethren. He was a person of immense proportions, particularly as regarded the paunch, which was a region of unparalleled richness and extent, and showed to particular advantage as he sat on horseback, his position there causing it to project considerably farther in advance than was its natural wont when on foot. His pony was a sturdy little animal, but of stature so diminutive, that the feet of the rider might have materially assisted his progress along the road, were it not that the sack-like formation of the members caused them to describe an equilateral triangle, in order to afford space to the fat little beast between—an arrangement which made a clear course of nearly half the king's highway.

The horseman who rode beside him, and who, from his brick-red complexion, sloping forehead, and small eyes, supplied very sufficient evidence of his Palatinate extraction, had the appearance of a wealthy farmer, considerably advanced in years, though not sufficiently so to abate or qualify, in the slightest degree, the expression of a countenance which was marked by the strongest and hardest lines which an habitual violence of character could produce, or to soften the fire of a small and piercing eye, which glanced from beneath its grizzled, sandy brow, with a spirit of strong inquiry and resolution.

The third traveller, who rode at a little distance behind, as if rather in the quality of servant than companion to the other two, we shall suffer to be described by the group of peasantry, who, in the indulgence of that idle curiosity which forms a shade on that dark side of the national character, left off their work as the strangers approached, and leaned forward on their spades, to bestow a gibe on the passing Palatines:—

"Mark the nose," said one, "was there ever the aiq'l of it seen? It starts out betune the two eyes fair enough,

only then it do be growen hether and thether, and every way as if it didn't know the way to the mouth, down."

"Like the gintlemin's borcens,"* said a second, "that they doesn't care how many turnens they'll make, so as they coom out upon the high road at last."

"Taken a ramble about the countenance for sport, this fine even."

"An' the legs! You'd imagine the *calves* o' them got hungry, an' went down about the ankles, seeing would there be a wisp o' hay in the brogues at all."

"Paddy Moran needn't ax a better bow to his fiddle at air a dance in the parish, any way."

"Heaven bless your work!" said the eldest of the travellers, in a strong German accent, not unmingled with a degree of the broad, drawling *patois* of the people he was addressing, as a turn in the road brought both parties within hail.

"An' you likewise!" was returned by a few voices, while some (such is the influence of wealth) conquered their contempt for the race of usurpers so far as to touch their hats.

"The village of Court-Mattress is fifteen long miles from you yet," said an elderly labourer, in answer to an inquiry made at him by the old Palatine. "Who can *them* be, now?" he continued, as, after a short consultation, the two strangers put spurs to their steeds, and quickened their pace from an equivocal kind of canter to a jolting, bone-breaking trot—"An' the sarvint after 'em, too! Gondoutha! It's easy for ye! But stir—stir, Jerry; what bizniz is it of ours? an' Paddy Barret six *sads* a-head of uz, an' the master coming over the gap, see."

We will follow the travellers. The evening was bright, still, and sunny. The air was quiet, the sky cloudless, the calm so profound that the voices of some sportsmen on the distant hills were heard almost as plainly by the wayfarers

as if they had been speaking in the adjacent fields, and the sound of the Race,* though many miles distant from them, came with a faint, but deep and perceptible influence upon their hearing. It was already far into the season of ear and blossom, and the country side over which they rode presented a scene of beauty and abundance which, had they passed the same way in a few months after, would have formed a wonderful contrast to the general appearance of want and misery which, then as well as now, the great encouragement held out to exporters of provision occasioned in the winter season in Ireland. Here a wide plain covered with barley yet green in ear undulated like a summer lake, and there the potato spread its dark green covering over many an acre, one particle of the produce of which was doomed never, perhaps, to supply a day's sustenance to the wretch by whose labour they had been cultivated. On one hand, the sober wheat contrasted its grave and wealthy air with the light rustling of the oatfield that adjoined it; while further in the distance many a field of rape, already in blossom, showed like broad sheets of gold, inlaid, as if to impart additional splendour to the gigantic mosaic of nature.

After they had passed out of the hearing of the group of the peasants, the two foremost of the travellers resumed a conversation which appeared to have been only interrupted for the purpose of obtaining information as to the progress of their route.

"Indeet, Mr. Shine," said the old man, after he had compressed his lips and given vent to a heavy sigh—"the cause is more than I can tell you: that some change must have taken place, I am perfectly certain, and some unpleasant one, too; for poor Sarah was one of the most dutiful children that ever parent blessed. It is very true that I suspected something when she mentioned in one of her

* The Race of Tarbert—an estuary in the River Shannon several miles in extent.

latest letters the appearance of that young ruffian about the village, and my heart burned within me when the poor deluded creature hinted the possibility of his becoming a reformed and graceful member. She might as well talk of the Evil One becoming a reformed and graceful member; for except what amendment the gallows will work in him, Dionysius will never be anything better than an ingrate and a profligate."

"He that can ingraft strange branches on the tree may surely at his pleasure revive the old and dissevered," said his companion. "But the common accidents of life may have caused an intermission in your correspondence without any failure of duty on the part of your child, whom I bless in my soul—remembering well her comeliness, and her docility on the occasion of my sojourning an evening at her aunt's, to whose care, I believe, you committed her, on leaving the land, some years past. How long since is the date of her last letter?"

"Five years."

"And how long have you been absent?"

The question appeared to excite some disagreeable associations in the mind of the old Palatine, and he paused for a considerable time, as if following up the train of melancholy recollections which it awakened, before he returned an answer. The details of the conversation which followed the interruption may be more briefly and conveniently given to the reader in our own words.

A sturdy-looking, black-haired, black-eyed little boy about nine or ten years of age, and clothed in a miserable shred of coarse frieze, was observed, at the blush of a fine summer dawn, trotting at full speed along a crooked and broken-up avenue, or *borheen*, leading to the farm-house of Isaac Segur, a comfortable Palatine landholder in the neighbourhood of the village which we have before mentioned. From the anxious and hesitating expression which was mingled with the natural boldness and darkness of his

countenance, it would have appeared to a stranger that the child was conscious of possessing no apology or authority for the intrusion which he contemplated, and he cast cautious and wavering glances on all sides before he ventured to clamber over the stile which brought him on the neat green plot before the cottage door. The windows were still closed, and everything around bore the appearance of perfect repose, insomuch that the adventurer paused, and remained seated on the stile for a few moments, with the air of one who has a purpose to accomplish, and sees a thousand terrors and difficulties between him and its fruition. A light curling smoke from one of the chimneys at length caught his eye, and having once assured himself on the preparatory indication within, he bounded from the hedge upon the little lawn, disturbing by his sudden and fay-like descent the yet slumbering animals who composed the stock of the industrious and well-appointed proprietor of the place. A flock of geese, goslings, and ganders flew with outstretched necks and loud hisses of unwelcome from beneath the hedge, and then marshalled themselves in battle array between him and the house, the male bird marching like a field-officer up and down the lines, and warning him, by most warlike cacklings, of the dangers of an assault. Some newly-shorn wethers bounded in dismay to the furthest limit of the area, and there huddled themselves together in a corner, as if in expectation of instant annihilation. A staggering bony calf threw up its hind legs, whisked its tail, cut a few strange capers, and followed their example. The little fellow did not appear much daunted by the confusion he had occasioned or the formidable host of enemies who seemed prepared to oppose his progress, and he was about to advance with great spirit; but his cheek grew pale, and his quick, jet-black eye began to assume a more expanded and watery appearance, when the deep thunder of a huge mastiff watch joined in terrific diapason with the cackling of the geese, the

bleating of sheep, the quacking of ducks, the grunting of pigs, and the clatter of a hundred different species of domestic fowl. Nevertheless, the invader stood manfully to his ground, and stooped forward in the vain hope of making an effectual struggle with the excited animal, on whom his eyes were fixed, when one of the front windows was thrown open, and a friendly voice interrupted its onset in good time.

"Faust, down! down, ser! back here agen—back!"

The countermand was given by a female who leaned half-dressed out of the window, while the young stranger, flushing with renewed courage, advanced to the door of the cottage, the dog Faust following, and snuffing inquisitively about him as they proceeded.

"Well, an' who are you, my little fellow?"

The "little fellow" raised his hand to his brow, and plucked himself by the forelock (a black and shining curl), in token of courtesy as he replied—

"Dinny Mac, thin."

"An' what brought you here, Dinny Mac, at this hour in the morning?"

"Wisha, I dun know."

"Where do you live—or who are you at all?"

"O then, I dun know, ma'am—only my mother, westwards, married another husband about a month sence, and I couldn't stand her at all after for bating me without any raison; and the man she took to was as bad as her, and they both tuk an' turned me out o' doores 'istherday, without sayen a word only bating me the two of 'em, wit the broomstick till me back was broke intirely."

"And what do you mean to do with yourself now, Dinny Mac?"

"Wisha, I dun know."

"What is it you were coming here for?"

"Seeing would I get me buckisht agin the road."

By this time the cottage door was opened, and a stout

looking hale man made his appearance, accompanied by an exquisitely beautiful girl, whose clear rosy cheeks, long flaxen hair, and full, well-opened eyes, contrasted finely with the strongly-marked and darkly-shaded features of the adventurous "Dinny." The latter remained leaning against the rough-cast wall, and picking off the little protuberances with his fingers, while he cast from time to time a shy and irresolute side-glance towards the fair daughter of the farmer. The man contemplated the intruder for some time in silence, and appeared doubtful of the course which he should adopt, when it was decided by a movement of the child who stood by him. After gazing with a soft and expanded stare of wonder upon the dark boy, she slided cautiously towards him, and again renewing her gaze of admiration, while the other returned her glance with one of unusual fire and intensity; half in intimidation, half in goodwill, the little girl protruded a pair of cherry lips, which were instantly honoured with a greeting that "came twanging off," by the unhesitating youth. The old Palatine's heart was struck in the soft place.

"Come, gaffer," said he, "since you have made yourself welcome with the young mistress, you'll have your breakfast at any rate. In with you, and behave yourself."

Dinny Mac went in as he was desired, but not, as the event proved, to make so brief a sojourn in the household as the proprietor intended. A succession of circumstances not worth detailing prevented his departure that day, and the next, and the next after that, until habit, hospitality, and convenience combined to establish him among the retainers of the domicile, in that equivocal office which in Irish rustic families is designated by the word *gorsoon*. His duty for many years was to run on messages to the neighbouring hamlet—to fetch a daily pennyworth of tobacco for the old woman—to keep the pigs upon their good behaviour—drive home the cows at night—watch the gardens at seed time—and in short, "turn his hand," and his feet too occasion-

ally, to any thing which it needed not the exertion of maturer limbs to accomplish. As far as attention to, and cheerfulness in the execution of every trust confided to him could go, it was impossible for Dinny—or Dionysius, as his new and more formal protectors called him—to give greater satisfaction to his patron than he did; but there was one evil occasioned by his presence in the house, which more than counterbalanced all his merits. The effect which his first appearance had produced on the infant daughter of the Palatine continued progressively on the increase, through the subsequent stages of childhood, girlhood, and youth; and at fifteen years of age the sensation with which she regarded the daring and dark-minded lad, might be found to resemble, in every particular, the mingled emotion of fear and admiration which he had occasioned her on the morning when accident first conducted him to her father's house. The real nature of the feeling continued precisely the same, but that time, long habit, and unavoidable proximity of intercourse, and the gradual development of her own character as it approached the seriousness of womanhood, had strengthened and deepened the affection into a rooted and engrossing passion—a circumstance evidently unfortunate for the poor girl, and the more extraordinary as the progress of intimacy with, and consequent insight into the character and disposition of her father's dependant was not calculated to add a well-founded esteem to the emotions which he had already excited in her mind. With this, however, we, as her historians, are not disposed to quarrel, for it is apparent that if love were not in the gentler sex altogether an anomaly—if woman made her reason on all occasions the counterscarp to her affections, and never yielded her heart on any terms but those of convenience, the very foundation of all romance would be annihilated. Her father, however, who was no philosopher, and could by no possible train of reasoning bring himself to discover points of coincidence or suitability between two characters filling situations almost

as distinct as those of menial and mistress, was overwhelmed with indignation and astonishment when the probability of so presposterous an attachment first broke upon him. A few words of fierce recrimination ended in an oath of eternal hatred and enmity between him and his protegé, and the latter was ejected from the dwelling where he had spent the greater portion of his life, with as little ceremony as was used in a similar predicament by the Baron of Thunterdentronck.

Some confinement, a little reasoning, a great deal of menace, and a natural pliability of character, soon produced all the effect which her father could have wished on the affections of the imprudent Sarah Segur. The proud spirited beggar-boy never appeared in the neighbourhood after—and seemed even to have extended his ready hatred to the gentle and suffering cause of his disfavour. 'Twas but a few weeks' peaking and pining—some dozen sighs—half dinners—tears—and one fit of hysterics, and Sarah Segur was again the bright-haired, blue-eyed, soft-cheeked ornament of her native village, and delight of her father's heart. What became of her first love, she neither asked, nor seemed to care.

Two years after this transaction, a very strong inducement held out by a commercial relative in Germany, occasioned a total revolution in the affairs of the worthy farmer. Committing his farm to the care of a cousin, and his daughter to the guardianship and tutelage of an experienced female relative, he exchanged, during some years, the land of his birth, for that of his ancestors, and found the advantage of the sacrifice he made of his domestic convenience, in a considerable increase of wealth. For some time, the accounts which he received from home were such as to leave him no ground to regret the step which he had taken, and he went on, hoarding money, and forming a thousand different schemes for its disbursement, when a letter from his daughter, informing him, though in the most

guarded and cautious manner, of the re-appearance of the delinquent Dinny in the neighbourhood, and even at the cottage of the Palatine, startled and filled him with dismay and apprehension. She described him in the most touching manner, as presenting a picture of misery, of repentance, and abject poverty, which would make resentment not only inhuman but ridiculous, and ended by suggesting, in a very circuitous way, the possibility of an entire reformation in the young man, in case her father should give him another trial. The sagacious Palatine, however, judged that either the inexperience or the enthusiasm of the letter-writer had led her into error, so far as her prognostic was concerned; and he was, although much against his inclination, compelled to suspect that she had used more or less exaggeration in her account of the young rebel's mean submission. His estimate of Dinny's character was right, although it was very true that the latter had, as Sarah mentioned, made his appearance on the farm. Segur immediately answered the letter in a tone of violent and unabated indignation, and the subject was not again renewed. In a little time after, an account reached him that his kinsman had been struck with blindness, and that several losses in consequence had accrued to the property. This latter circumstance, however, which he was sufficiently provided against, gave him not a tithe of the uneasiness which was occasioned by the irregularity, and at length the infrequency of the letters which were transmitted to him from his family, and the conviction that some dreadful change had taken place, was soon confirmed by the total cessation of all communication whatever. Filled with a thousand alarms and uncertainties, he was now returning to ascertain the cause, whatever it might be, of the singular neglect which had pained him.

In the meantime it is necessary that we should glance at the fortunes of his young foe during the interval. He had contracted, soon after his expulsion from the Palatine's

household, a close friendship with the sole offspring of his unkind mother's second marriage, who had been, for some years past, left with himself in a state of orphanage, under circumstances peculiarly calculated (if that alone had not been sufficient) to bind them to each other; in a league, too, much closer than that involved by the general claims of their relationship, which, according to the opinions of the class in which they were brought up, are sufficient grounds for a *casus fœderis* of mutual offence and defence on all occasions. The brothers resided together in the cabin in which they had first seen the light—held their acre of potato-ground in common, lived together, worked together, fought together, and drank together. This very closeness of attachment, however, had unhappily the effect of involving them in a greater number of quarrels with their neighbours than that to which the hereditary privilege of an Irish peasant might be supposed fairly to entitle them. The secret of this tendency to disunion might be found in the fact that either of the friends was far more apt to resent an insult, real or imagined, offered to the other, than if he had received it in his own person; and the natural consequence was, that before long, their hands, like those of Ishmael, were against every man's, and every man's hand against theirs. Still, however, there was no deep moral offence, of such a nature as could awaken the serious indignation of their neighbours, imputed to them, and their extraordinary fondness for fighting had only the effect of injuring themselves, and increasing the custom of the village apothecary.

Great therefore was the consternation which spread through the cottage circles, when one summer morning as the Macnamaras were leaving their humble cabin with their *slanes* on their shoulders, in order to proceed to their daily toil—a party of soldiers, with a magistrate at their head, intercepted their progress, and laying hands on the younger brother, arrested him in the name of the king for a midnight assault on the dwelling-house of the very man who was

appointed the guardian of his property and his child, by the Palatine. It came like a thunderstroke upon the mind of the elder brother, Dinny—as he was still called—he thought it impossible that the transaction could have taken place without his knowing it; he remonstrated violently—but the civil officer persisted in the course he was pursuing, and the sullen silence of the younger, joined to the paleness and conscious anxiety which overspread his features, operated with a more fearful influence upon the incredulity of the youth, than all the confident pertinacity of his accusers. The prisoner was led away and flung into the county gaol, after wringing the hand of his relative with a bitterness of feeling, which those only can imagine who part for the last time with a good friend, and leave him no legacy but shame and loneliness.

Neither has it fallen to the lot of many to know what the degree of that loneliness was in the instance of the elder Macnamara. Unacquainted with, from the manner of his education, as well as unfitted, from the nature of his disposition, for the exercise of any of those noble resources by which more cultivated minds are enabled to support themselves beneath the pressure of an unforeseen affliction, he abandoned himself, without an effort at resistance, to the spirit of desolation which came upon him. He became spiritless, and desponding, neglected his employments, forsook the wake, the dance, the fair, the hurling match, and the public-house, and awaited in helpless anxiety the issue of his brother's trial, stalking like one that is moped with sorrow, around the precincts of the prison, shunning the sight and converse of his old acquaintances, and pitied even by those whose heads bore frequent testimony to his promptitude and ready spirit in earlier and prouder days. Had the offence with which his brother was charged been merely an outrage, it would only have affected his fortunes, or his personal safety, and left some consolation to those who bore his name; but theft—sheep-stealing had been superadded,

and disgrace was fixed upon his reputation; for, among the peasantry of Ireland, their proverbial honesty is not so much occasioned by their abhorrence of the positive injury which the contrary practice inflicts on their neighbour, as by their contempt for the indication which the latter affords of a low and mean spirit on the part of the perpetrator. Thus, for instance, on one occasion, when the elder brother overheard a neighbour "wondering that any body wouldn't drop down with the shame, to be caught doen such a *mane* thing," and retorted on the hag, that she had herself had a son hanged for murder, she replied, with infinite composure and satisfaction, "Oh, the heavens be praised that it wasn't a cow or a sheep he stole!"

The compassion entertained for the elder and unsuspected brother, was sufficient to procure him admission on the day of Macnamara's trial, within the precincts of the bar, and at the foot of the table appointed for the accommodation of evidence and of the crier, a bustling and important personage, whose duty it is in Irish courts to be as noisy as possible in procuring "silence"—to perform the part of mouthpiece to the clerk of the crown—marshal the spectators to their different places—thrust out the orange-women—knock little boys on the head with a long white wand—and convey by means of a slit in the end of said wand, epistles from all quarters of the court. Under the patronage of this great man, poor young Macnamara was permitted to occupy one of the steps leading to the witness table, while his brother was called on before God and his country, to answer to a charge of life and death.

It is needless to enter into any detail either on the particulars of the case, or the feelings of the friends, according as every circumstance of corroboration was brought forward; until at length, the deep and deadly conviction of the guilt of the accused became stamped upon the mind of every spectator, and was manifested by the emphatic nod and compression of the lips, which passed in silence among the

more intelligent of the listeners. Still, however, the eyes of the devoted wretch and his forlorn relative were fixed, in all but utter hopelessness, upon the door of the jury room; the stake at issue being too awfully great to permit them to yield up their reliance upon the hope which they knew to be unfounded, until circumstances should have forcibly torn it from them. That door at length was opened, and the doom of the prisoner was manifest in the solemn and reluctant manner of the foreman, as he tendered the written verdict to the clerk of the crown. The criminal cast a dreary glance around him, when called upon to plead against his sentence, but could not utter a word: and the judge had already proceeded far in his discourse to the prisoner, and was approaching the usual form of condemnation, when a figure, pale, wild, and haggard in gesture and appearance, appeared on the witness table. It was that of the elder Macnamara. He raised his hands imploringly toward the bench, while his frame shook and his features quivered with emotion.

"My lord!" he exclaimed, "stop talken to the boy, for 'twas I done the deed."

A universal murmur of astonishment passed through the court at this declaration. A whisper at the same time was circulated among the counsel, the import of which seemed to be confirmed by the half-crazy appearance and demeanour of the youth. The prisoner was appealed to.

"My lord," he replied with a mournful toss of the head, "I wouldn't have you *give in* to him—I won't say it was meself done it—but it wasn't he any way."

The young man was in consequence removed, as a person whose enthusiastic affection had affected his reason, and (as the legal phrase is) judgment and execution followed accordingly, in the person of the younger brother.

The original character of the elder Macnamara was now completely restored. He once more resumed all, and more than all, the ready violence and fierceness of demeanour for

which he was formerly far more remarkable than his dead brother, and seemed to exist only in the hope of being one day enabled to avenge the blood of the latter, against his prosecutor, the guardian Segur, and the whole of his family, excepting perhaps the innocent object of his own early attentions. He now seemed to have abandoned every other care but that of gratifying this single passion. His cabin was forsaken, his garden left untilled, all his accustomed haunts appeared to be forgotten or deserted, and he might occasionally be observed gliding at night-fall, like a spectre, among the sally-groves and along the hedges in the neighbourhood of his enemy. The latter felt that he had deep cause to regret a transaction which rendered him obnoxious to a being so desperate and ill-conditioned as his persecuter. He was a weak, sickly man, of a nervous and almost feminine feebleness of mind and frame, and never dared venture out unaccompanied by some person of strength sufficient to protect him against any attempt which could be made on his life; and even with these precautions he found himself compelled to eat his bread amid all the terrors of insecurity. All the exertions and persuasions of his friends, his niece among the number (who calculated much on her own influence over the mind of the young man, if they could but find an opportunity of using it,) were ineffectual in restoring calmness to his mind. His sleep was broken by frightful dreams, and the oath which his foe had taken in his own hearing, that he would have "blood for blood before the grass should wither on his brother's grave," sounded for ever in his ears. After many fruitless efforts, however, to obtain an opportunity of accomplishing his threats, young Macnamara suddenly disappeared from the neighbourhood, and nothing more was seen or heard of him for several months. Better hopes began to break in upon the mind of the object of his hate, and he ventured, after some time spent in many vain endeavours to ascertain the position of

his enemy, to resume his wonted occupations about the farm without fear of personal danger.

CHAPTER III.

"Now all you demons that delight in blood—
Ye spirit-stirring agents—whose it is
To fan hate's embers when they smoulder—now
Hover about me! Wave your burning pinions
Till you shake flame into my inmost soul—
And let pale Memory's hand mark but one point
In the wide circle of past time—and that
Will goad me to the task—"

He was returning on a bright moonlight night from a water-mill in his own neighbourhood, where he had remained to a late hour, superintending the grinding of a considerable quantity of corn, and making the night jovial with the miller, in the excess of his delight at a piece of good news with which the latter had been entertaining him. This was no other than that one Dennis Macnamara had been tried and convicted at the assizes of Cork, for some felonious offence, and obtained a free passage in a king's ship bound for the new world. They had been quaffing to the favourable passage of the young emigrant, until Segur became

"Na that fou
But just a drappie in his ee,"

and solemnly protested, in a speech much more remarkable for the emphatic energy and needlessly vehement gesticulation with which it was delivered, than for its eloquence or sound sense, against taking another tumbler.

He had proceeded already a considerable distance on his way home. His health appeared to have been restored at a word. He trod the earth as if he were not of the earth, he threw his hat airily upon the side of his head, stepped

on his toes, and with gay and expanding bosom chanted (in a manner which sounded to his own ears extremely loud, articulate, and musical, but which in those of an unprejudiced listener appeared remarkable for the irregularity of its cadences, the unreasonable vehemence of an occasional bar, and a general tendency in the pronunciation of the words to dispense altogether with the use of consonants)—chanted, we say—a recollected stanza of the famous national air:

"He that goes to bed, and goes to bed mellow,
Lives as he ought to do,
Lives as he ought to do,
Lives as he ought to do, and dies an honest fellow."

He was in the act of ascending a slight acclivity covered with furze bushes, through which the pathway winded, when a heavy panting, and a sound of footsteps in rapid pursuit, alarmed, and made him turn round. He beheld, in the clear moonlight, not more than three yards from the spot on which he stood, the figure of his enemy in the act of rushing upon him, while the pantings of his weariness were mingled with a horrible half-suppressed laugh of ecstatic expectation. The light shone full upon his countenance. It was wasted almost to the very skeleton, the eyes were distended and protruding to an unnatural degree, and the thin lips were dragged back by the ghastly smile, so as to expose the teeth which were fast clenched, half in rage, half in triumph. The sight instantly and perfectly sobered poor Segur. Uttering a low cry of horror, he clasped his hands above the head, and fled down the hill with the speed of winged Fear itself, in the direction of the mill. It lay at a considerable distance from the spot, and the poor sickly wretch's heart sunk within him when he recollected, even in the extremity of his affright, the reputation for agility as well as strength which the youth had obtained in his neighbourhood. But the latter was no longer the man he had been in those days. Famine, disease, and anguish of mind

and frame had fastened upon him, and reduced his personal vigour nearly to the same level with that of his intended victim. Fear, moreover, is perhaps a fleeter passion than revenge, and Segur did not speedily lose the advantage which he had at the outset. His pursuer was so close upon his track that he sometimes felt his fingers upon his shoulders, but the slight touch operated with an electrical influence upon his frame, infusing new and sudden vigour into his limbs, and enabling him for a moment to place a wider distance than before between his enemy and himself. Lights were seen still burning in the windows of the mill as they approached, and the broad door stood invitingly open at the distance of a few hundred yards, while several figures passed to and fro in the interior, fully revealed in the strong light. Both now made a desperate effort—Segur, cheered by the prospect of succour—his pursuer, maddened by the apprehension of losing this single opportunity of vengeance. Putting, therefore, to its extremest trial a frame into which a morsel of food had not entered for the last two days, he closed on the frightened Palatine just as he gained the doorway—fixed his fingers on his throat, and staggered with his prey into the centre of the mill house. Half suffocated by the pressure of his neck, the latter could only give vent to a low and gurgling sound, and extend his arms for aid towards the astonished workmen. The desperate youth endeavoured to drag him toward that part of the room where the great machine was performing its rapid and gigantic evolutions—but his strength failed him—the struggles of his victim were sufficient to baffle his efforts until the workmen rescued him from the death-grasp—when extending his fingers in a feeble and delirious effort to renew the hold which he had been compelled to relinquish, he fell forward on the earthen floor in a state of utter exhaustion.

A few days after this adventure, while the young man was still confined to a sick bed in the neighbourhood, by

the consequences of the dreadful exertion of body and mind which he had undergone; and while the object of his hate still continued half bewildered by the recollection of the hair-breadth escape he had experienced, a fair ambassadress arrived on the part of the latter. It was a long time since the youth had seen Sally Segur, with her light straw hat tied simply under her small chin—her gentle soft eyes, and blooming, healthful countenance—her light and neatly attired figure, so characteristic in all its details of cottage peace and comfort—and the sight affected him more deeply than he imagined anything could have done. It was not that his love for her was at any time of a deep or ardent nature—on the contrary, he had been suspected by some few individuals of being visionary enough to entertain such a sentiment towards a young person, far his superior in rank and endowments, who had once condescended to honour him with her hand at a village merry-making, but he *had* regarded Sally with feelings of affection notwithstanding, and her appearance now, unexpected as it was, suddenly threw him back upon the memory of happier days, and overpowered him with the anguish of the retrospection. It was long, too, since Sally had seen her old lover, but all that she had heard, and all that she could imagine, was insufficient to prepare her for the shocking alteration which he had undergone. She reached him her hand, and turning in dismay and agony from the wild and sepulchral stare which he fixed upon her, sunk with a burst of tears into a chair at the bed-side.

All that the eloquence of passion, and of virtuous enthusiasm, all that youth, beauty, and suppliant tears could do to move him from his purpose of revenge, was done by the affectionate girl. She bade him remember their former friendship—modestly urged her own sufferings and truth—and conjured him, for his sake and hers, to forget what was past, and wait patiently for a time of happiness that was sure to come. He heard her without argument or acquies-

cence, and suffered her to depart with the conviction that she had prevailed nothing.

Her visits were frequently renewed, as the convalescent began to improve in health and spirits. She had, unfortunately, at length an opportunity of strengthening her plea by the intelligence that her uncle and guardian, whose nerves had been completely shattered by this last shock, had on that morning, when all the world arose to the enjoyment of light and mirth, awoke to the dreariness of an eternal night—he had been struck with blindness.

The news gave no pleasure to his enemy. He appeared even to regret a misfortune which had not proceeded from his own hand, and in the prosecution of what he considered his just revenge, but he could not altogether appear insensible to the anguish of the gentle mediator. He took refuge from her entreaties in counter solicitations—urged, as she had done, their ancient vows, and stipulated as a condition by which his amity, or rather his indifference, was to be purchased—that Sally should at once consent to have those vows accomplished, and accompany him to a distant part of the country. He met, as in all probability he had himself anticipated, a direct, though not an indignant refusal; but the young maiden did not deem it necessary to avoid his society, while she persevered in the observance of what she was taught to consider her duty.

Again the evil spirit appeared to have taken possession of the soul of the young man. Finding that he could not prevail on his love to sacrifice to him her obedience to her parent, whom she both loved and feared, with an intensity only inferior to that which she felt for the youth himself, he overwhelmed her with reproaches, renewed his protestations of vengeance, and left her half dead with grief and fear. Several months rolled on, and nothing more was heard of him in the neighbourhood. Divers reports then got into circulation; it was asserted by some that he had joined the smugglers on the western coast—by others, that he had

enlisted under the banners of the successor of the notorious Redmond O'Hanlon (the Robin Hood of his time and country) and his mates—while a few were found to say that he had selected the more honourable and legitimate standard of his lawful sovereign. Nothing certain, however, was learned of his proceedings, and in some time further his name appeared to have been forgotten. Sally, in the meantime, had greater difficulty in reconciling herself to this his last desertion of her than to the former—for, in the unresisted intercourse which subsisted between them, the passion which she indulged had become more firmly rooted in her heart than ever.

It was an unfortunate circumstance for her, likewise, that her uncle's misfortune prevented him from exercising that rigid surveillance over her motions, which might be necessary to the prudent government of a young maiden of her rank, gifted with spirits so light and heedless, and feelings so deep and susceptible as hers. She contracted a greater number of intimacies among the girls of her own rank in the neighbourhood, than was in accordance with the injunctions of her rigid father—frequented their houses—pastimes—and festive assemblies—furnishing, on those occasions, when she happened to be detained from home for an unusual length of time, such excuses as were likely to satisfy her querulous old guardian.

Considerable agitation was produced in the adjacent village, by the appearance, one Sunday morning, of a placard, nailed against the trunk of an old elder tree in the chapel-yard, written in characters which the schoolmaster declared, with a countenance of deep and serious reproof, he could compare to nothing more intelligible than "the scratchen of a bantam-cock in a hape o' sand"—and stating that Mr. O'Flanagan, travelling dancing-master, would give lessons during the ensuing fortnight at Davy Dogherty's barn, at the low rate of two skilleens* and a tester† the week—

* Shillings. † Sixpence.

(precisely what the village Dionysius aforesaid, as he himself declared in terms of high indignation, charged for a whole quarter's instruction in the rudiments of general learning; marvelling deeply in what consisted this superior importance of the heels above the head, unless it originated in people's conceit and vanity)—the said handbill moreover announcing that the week's lesson would be concluded by a ball—tickets, including a tumbler o' punch, ten-pence—gentleman taking a ticket, allowed to trate a lady, &c., &c. —and concluding, as it has been maliciously, and we believe falsely asserted, with a request that "no gentleman would come without shoes and stockings."

The inhabitants of an Irish village must be reduced very low indeed, when a call, such as that just mentioned, is suffered to pass away unheeded and unanswered. The Albert of the bogs had many pupils—and before the evening of the "ball" arrived, he had disposed, on his own terms, of nearly twice as many tickets as the barn could hold.

Sally was ignorant of the village etiquette which presumed that no "lady" would appear among the belles of the evening, who had not been "trated" by a "gentleman"—otherwise, as she would have allowed no *chaperon*, she must have remained, much against her own inclination, in her own house. She hesitated not therefore to indulge the strong curiosity which she felt to witness the village festivity, and having provided herself with the master key of all public amusements, she stole away from her uncle's side, and joined a motherly female acquaintance, who was proceeding to the "dance-house" to ascertain the progress made during the preceding week by a hopeful, sleek-headed "boy of her own." They arrived, fortunately for Sally, as she thereby avoided the sneers and whispers of those more fortunate maidens, whose attractions had procured them the protection of cicisbeos, some time before the ball opened, and while the greater portion of places were yet unoccupied.

Mr. O'Flanagan received them, violin in hand, at the door

of the barn, or assembly room (as it had the honour of filling that office this evening)—described a flourish with his bow in the air, and then lowered it smartly to the ground—drew his heels gracefully into the first position, turned out his toes like Sir Christopher Houghton in the Critic, and completed the ceremony of reception with a bow which was evidently intended as a pattern for all the male spectators—lowering his head until the queue of his periwig (a fashionable article of dress which added materially to his importance in this region of shock heads) arose, and culminated to the zenith. He then marshalled the ladies to their seats on one of the forms which were ranged along the walls for the accommodation of the guests—and which was strewed with fresh rushes, in order to afford a "saft sate" for the gentle sex—while he proceeded to put the young pupil through his evolutions.

"A very fine boy, indeed, ma'am—if he had only a little polish. Now, sir, spring up off o' the ball o' your futt, an come down in the third position. Very good. Hold up your head, sir,—no fear your feet will run away from you while you watch them so close—keep in your tongue, sir,—there's a bandle o' your tongue thrust out, as if that would be any use to you in the step. Now—one—two—three—very good," &c., &c., &c.

The company soon began to thicken, and in a little time complaints began to arise of the scantiness of room, which were ingeniously obviated by arranging a few forms in the open air—and preparing a second dancing area in the bright moonlight, the master of the ceremonies carefully dividing his time and attention between the guests within and those without, so that neither party might complain of a deficiency in this respect. The latter were accommodated with the violin of the dancing-master himself, while the company within received sufficient reason for dancing from a long and lean piper who had been hired for the evening as an assistant in the orchestral department.

The ball opened with a most tortuous dance called the Reel of Three—which, however scientific, did not fully satisfy the longings of the mercurial spectators, whose mettlesome heels were eager for livelier operations. For some time no occurrence took place to disturb the gravity and decorum which prevailed in the assembly, with the exception of an awkward blunder made by Sally, who during a pause in the music leaned back unwittingly on the piper's unexhausted bag, from which proceeded a squeal so mournful and so like the remonstrance of a living creature in pain, as convulsed the hearers with laughter, and covered our poor heroine with confusion. Soon after, while the floor was again clear, and the gentlemen were plying their fair ones with agreeable attentions in various parts of the room, the piper seeing Sally disengaged, and perhaps willing to show that he harboured no malice, danced up to her, throwing the drone up over his left shoulder, playing a rapid jig tune, and capering away with a pair of enormously long legs, looking—in his close cropped head, black worsted stockings, torn blue jacket, tight pantaloons, and red woollen cravat or comforter—more like the ideal of an evil genius than any thing human. When Sally cheerfully danced forward, amid the shouts of delight and approbation which broke from the assembly, her strange partner retired to the centre of the floor, where he continued to time his own music, now pounding the earth like a pavier's rammer, now flying from side to side, as if he trod on air, and anon remaining to grind the floor in one spot, throwing back his head, and moving it from one side to another with a certain ravished air. The guests gradually gathered around the dancers, following, with eyes and mouth distended to ecstatic admiration, the feet of the extraordinary piper, and unable to repress a cheering shout of rapture when, by a fresh wild bound, he seemed to recover all his former vigour as fast as it was exhausted. The contagion at length spread—the floor was covered with emulative groups, and the dancing-master's genteel reels and figures

were all merged into the national and inspiring mourneen. Overpowered with fatigue, Sally at length permitted herself to be danced and played to her seat by the piper, who whispered in her ear as she turned to sit down—"There's one you know waiten for you in the sally-grove, Miss."

The words were almost inaudible, but such as they were they made Sally start and look up suddenly. The speaker was already in his former place, playing on, and directing his attention to the dancers. She imagined either that her senses deceived her or that the words were addressed to some other person.

The dancing and music proceeded with no less enthusiasm on the green plot without. Longing to breathe the cool night wind, after her exertions in the house, Sally walked to the door, and, leaning against the jamb, contemplated the motions of the dancers in the moonlight. While she remained in this position, the name of her old lover, Macnamara, pronounced by some one of a group of persons who occupied a seat near the door, caught her ear.

"And did you hear," said one, "how Miss Byrne herself was getten on?"

"She never 'll get over it," replied a middle-aged woman. "I spoke to-day with James Mihil, their servant-boy, an' he toult me himself that she was getten worse and worse every day. It seems the match is broke off out an' out betune herself and Mr. Robert Kumba, a kind-hearted boy he is too, indeed, but not over and above knowing. She never was heard to screech or cry after her father's death, an' that's a bad sign, for the silent grief is always that that lies heavy on the heart an' breaks it."

"I'd be sorry anything should happen her," said one of the hearers, "she was a good, sweet-tempered young lady, an' a nice dancer. Did you mind her the day she danced with Dinny Macnamara, that they say is listed since, at the May pole?"

"I did," replied a young man, who had just been

danced out of his place, "an' if you'll b'lie' me, I didn't think so much of her. She trod so light, there wasn't hardly a blade o' the grass turned under her. Not so with Dinny, I'll be bail. That was the boy for pounden! The place was as if a pig had been rooten it after him."

"They say Dinny Macnamara was taken with her himself after that, in spite of all that come and went between him and Sally Segur, the Palatine's daughter, over——"

A sudden "hush!" and a low murmur which passed among the group of gossips informed our heroine that her proximity was discovered, and she retired a little farther in, continuing to fix her eyes on the dancers without, where a new spectacle had caught her attention.

This was a young man, much better dressed than the remainder of the company, who had not made his appearance in the interior of the house, and who seemed anxious to partake of the amusements that were going forward as freely as it was possible to do without exposing himself, in any remarkable degree, to observation. In a short time, as he turned round and approached her, so that the glare of light from the open door fell on his features, her heart bounded at the sight of her lover, once more restored to health and bloom, and apparently enjoying a degree of affluence to which he had never at any time been accustomed.

"Is it you, Denny?" she asked, in a low whisper.

"Husht!" replied the man; "that is not my name now, Sally. I'm going to the little grove, beyond, and do you follow me in a little time, for I want to speak to you."

He disappeared, leaving the astonishment and curiosity of the girl excited in the highest degree. She did not hesitate to give him the meeting as he requested.

Soon after she had left the dance-house, the mirth of the evening became more uproarious than ever, until it seemed likely to terminate as Irish festivities frequently do, in a

general engagement of a serious nature. The symptoms began, as usual, in vehement protestations of eternal friendship, after which a few blows were given in pure love, and gratefully returned with good interest, until, at length, their excited affections began to be demonstrated in a series of kicks and fistycuffs, which a stranger might mistake for indications of earnest resentment. The men hallooed and fought—the girls screamed and fled—the dancing-master himself, interfering to keep the peace, received an unmerciful drubbing, which prevented him from renewing the exercise of his profession for some weeks, and the sounds of rage, wailing, and lamentation terminated an evening which had been devoted, by common consent, to purposes of mirth and harmony. A few were *killed* (that is, severely beaten), many wounded; but the list of "missing" on the next morning was found to be confined to Sally. She was seen no more in her native village.

We now feel it necessary to return to our travellers, whom we deserted, for the purpose of laying these details before the reader, in the second chapter.

After riding about two miles farther on a narrow, broken road, leading through a tract of alternate crag and marsh, or bog—during the progress of which Segur gave his old companion, the only old acquaintance whom he had met since his return, the principal facts of the detail with which I have just furnished the reader—the travellers, made anxious by the fall of the first shades of evening, sought to obtain farther information as to the proximity of their destination. As they looked round them for some person from whom they might make the necessary inquiries, a stout, wild-haired wench jumped on the road from a stile leading to a little avenue, along which she had been running towards them, and dropping a short courtesy, was about to pass on, when the Palatine put a switch before her, and made his question with as much civility as he could muster. She looked at him for a moment, then at

his fat companion, then at the comically shaped attendant, shook back her thick and greasy hair, so as to disclose a countenance that showed at least a week's abstinence from the luxury of an ablution, and curled her dark and hardened lip into an expression of the most forcible contempt, after which, without answering the question, she tucked up her stuff gown, so as to disclose an enormous unstockinged ankle, and making a short run at the fence on the roadside, jumped, with considerable agility, on the top, where she waved her huge arm above her head, and shouted, at the top of a shrill *soprano* voice—"Hoo ee!—Shane, Dick, Davy, Ned, and Shamus, come in to the pzaties—Hoo-ee!"——

The men to whom this welcome exhortation was addressed, were at a quarter of a mile distant at least. Perceiving them depositing their spades in the furrows, the fair herald drew an enormous reeking *cup* [potato] from her own pinned-up stuff petticoat, and seating herself down on the fence, condescended to notice the individuals of the despicable race of *Palentins*, who stood waiting her leisure, half amused, half irritated:—

"How far are we from the village of Court Mattress, my good girl?"

Another pause ensued before the reply (as usual, a counter interrogation) could be elicited:—

"'Ti n't aistwar is from behind ye're comen?"

Segur explained.

"Why then, Court Mattress is twenty long mile from ye yit, every spade o' the road."

The preacher and the layman interchanged a glance of surprise and disappointment.

"Our journey is lengthening then as we lessen it, for we have travelled two miles since it was only fifteen."

"*Petere semper fugientem Italiam*," said a voice close behind them. Segur turned, and beheld a thin-faced lad, hatless and shoeless, a ragged coat, surmounting a still more

patched and ragged under-costume, and a leather covered ink-bottle dangling by a strap from the only button he was master of. "*Tace, puella mea*, whisht! howl,* you jade —why mislead the gintlemin?"

"A pretty fellow you are, indeed, to hope for any luck, an' you here directen the Palentins.

"Uncharitable being," said Mr. Shine, "the Samaritan inquired not the creed nor the country of him whose wounds he dressed by the wayside."

"Faix, I meant no harm," said the girl. "Av ye take the long and the safe road, ye'll find it's twenty good miles, every wattle of it; but to be sure, an' ye like to fall in with the highwaymen (the plundherers, that are murtheren the country), ye may take the short cut across by Mark Spellacy's inn, on the common, an' ye'll shorten the way four miles."

"It is worth trying," said Segur.

"Who toult you dat the highwaymen was out, now?" inquired the thin-faced lad, bending a sharp look on the girl.

"Who toult me, inagh? Wasn't it themselves, with Suil Dhuv at their head, that shot Segur in the glyn, there isn't hardly a fortnight there sence."

The old Palatine bent forward on the neck of his horse, and repeated the name in a low and anxious whisper, as if to assure himself of the reality of what he heard.

"'Iss, thin, Segur,—the Palentin, the blind man that was returnen by the glyn from the pattern, and was shot through the head upon the haith, nobody knows for what, nor for why, only them that done it."

"It is no matter," said the old man, who had recovered his self-possession during the last speech—"I am well provided against such accidents, and I will take the short way, Switzer! ride close behind us—Mr. Shine, come, dash on, man—I'd like to know what we have to learn next."

* Hold!—be silent.

"It is a tempting of Providence," muttered the reluctant Shine.

"Dere's enoogh o' de daylight before ye yet if ye stir," said the poor scholar. "Af ye'd want a guide across the common——" he concluded the sentence by a significant gesture, and shuffling of the feet, which was readily understood.

"We intend to ride hard, and you have no horse," said the Palatine.

"O never let dat trouble your honour, dere's many a worse roadster than old Shanks' mare." And throwing himself into an easy flinging trot, he dashed forward at a rate that showed he had some ground for his confidence. The three travellers followed at a brisk rate. Doctor Shine, whose condition showed that he had been accustomed to regular hours and comfortable living, did not at all approve of the sudden and seemingly hazardous resolution formed by his companion. They had been travelling together for more than eight hours, having fallen upon one another accidentally at the inn where the worthy self-constituted ecclesiastic stopped to breakfast. The double duties of lunch and dinner, neither of which this conscientious divine would have very willingly neglected, remained yet undischarged, and he felt exceedingly reluctant to prolong the season of abstinence if by any contrivance it could be terminated. No means of doing so, however, appeared likely to present themselves in the dreary tracts of soil over which they were now journeying; and the tone of feeling into which the last conversation had thrown his friend, was such as to make him altogether oblivious of his own, as well as of the doctor's necessities in this respect. All the sympathy of which he could confidently assure himself, was such as Abie Switzer, the queer-shaped servant of the Palatine, and their horses afforded. The perils, too, of another and darker nature which belonged to the route they were pursuing, and which became invested in the mind of the man of peace

with gradually deepening hues of terror, in proportion as the shades of evening advanced—and the road, unguarded by ditch or dyke, began to assume a still more rugged and unfrequented appearance, as it wound among a series of black, craggy, and close set hillocks, covered only in a few places with the tufts of broom and brushwood—the dangers, we repeat, of every description, which now became more strikingly evident, afforded new grounds of reluctance to the unadventurous Shine. Nevertheless he proceeded for a time in silence, judging that a proposal of delay originating in merely sensual or carnal motives would come with an ill grace from a mortified professor of religion; and he even began to entertain thoughts of a martyr-like perseverance in the purpose laid down by his companion, when the plans of the whole party were counteracted by a resolution of the preacher's little pony.

They had now arrived at the head of an acclivity, from which a somewhat more extended tract of country was visible than had as yet been afforded them by the nature of the land which they had passed. Immediately before the door of a public-house, which formed the only dwelling within sight, the road divided and cast off on both sides of a steep and toilsome ascent (which we believe is one of the minor national evils that have lately been removed by the English benefaction of 1822). A few yards from this junction of the ways stood a ruined bridge, which made but "two paces and a stride" across the Ovaan, or the White River—a little stream so called, perhaps, from its waters being of an unusual blackness, owing to the boggy ground in which they have their source. The inn, which, as is customary, went by the name of its owner rather than its sign, was a low thatched house, with a withered branch and sign protruded over the doorway. One side of the latter presented to the view of the *carman*, returning with vehicle unburthened and groaning pocket from the nearest corn-market, a rosy-faced, well-vested, full-length portrait

of the Patron Saint of the kingdom, with crook in hand, and extended arms, gesticulating a significant welcome, made still more significant and irresistible by the following lines scrawled in white paint underneath :—

Pass You Est
or Pass you West,
pass Spellacy's Punch
And You'll Pass the Best.
Morgan's Entire.

The day-labourer, who with spade on shoulder, and forehead pale and moist from the forenoon's toil, descended the hill on the other side, had his admiration excited by a flaming battle scene, which was also explained underneath to represent—

[the Stormin of Dendermond be Mark Spellacy's, Good Beds.]

And if abundance of smoke and fire can be supposed to compensate for the absence of all other characteristics of a battle scene, the artist had been most successful in his representation of the horrors of war.

The comparatively comfortable air of this mountain hostelrie soon arrested the acute and experienced eye of the preacher; and it appeared, too, as if his faithful pony shared his feelings, for as soon as the travellers arrived opposite the feeding-trough, which was placed before the doorway, the sturdy little animal, to the great delight of its master, pulled up, and remained stock still, with an air of determination in its eye which was sufficient to show that no inducement whatever, but the gratification of its desires, would be able to influence its movements. What those desires were the doctor readily perceived.

"The creature," said he, "has been accustomed to have its daily sustenance administered about this hour, and its bowels yearn for the usual allowance."

"Dere's good lodgen for man or beast at Mark Spellacy's," said the young man.

The Palatine urged their departure.

"We have temptations enough to struggle with," said Mr. Shine; "we pray to be delivered from them, and we ought consequently to seize every opportunity of avoiding them where there is no end to be gained by exposing ourselves to their influence. Mechanical modes are sometimes allowable in fitting the mind for successful resistance against the assaults of the Tempter."

"Manen," said the poor scholar, "that a good dinner will prepare and strengthen a man for the spiritual combat?"

"The Turks," continued Mr. Shine, not heeding the query, "shout from the top of a minaret, the steeple folk announce the word by clanking together a club and prodigious cylinder of metal, even the great advocates of self-denial, the papists, administer a sensuous stimulus in music; and we who are of the wiser class conceive that the best possible mode of preserving a Christian-like evenness of temper, a saint-like indifference to the operation of events around us, is by using all such internal and external appliances as Heaven has furnished us with, for the purpose of preventing unprofitable irritation. And that such has been the object of allotting us a number of senses capable of receiving gratification is sufficiently evident; for, what were noses made for, except to smell, what mouths made for, except to eat?"

"Not a ha'p'orth," said Abie Switzer.

"Barren to drink now an' den," said the foot-traveller. "Soomthen dat way meself talks when I owe a man a grudge, an' see a fair vacancy for giving him a knock on de head. What were fists made for, except to strike? says I. I wish I could persuade de priest of it. May be your honour would try it wit him?"

"As for myself," said Abie, "I'm always most patient after dinner or a good hot supper, an' I don't care who knows it."

"And for me," resumed the preacher, "I see nothing short of a visible tempting of Providence in rejecting a proffered consolation. Besides, the instinct of my animal decides against any further postponement of the customary refection, and seems to agree with me, that to proceed on our way with mortified appetites would be merely a monkish and papistical resolution."

After pausing a moment, the old Palatine dismounted in silence, and led his horse to the door of the inn, in the manner of one who had been prevailed upon by a train of reflections in his own mind, rather than by the reasoning of the self-ordained divine. The most convincing argument, perhaps, which the latter employed might be indicated in the obstinacy of his pony. He did not enter the inn until he had seen the sturdy animal accommodated with a due portion of oats, which he tied in a bag about its head.

CHAPTER IV.

From our infancy we have some ideas, though originally introduced by the most trifling incidents, which direct us during the whole course of our life, and inspire us either with courage or cowardice, rashness or superstition.

Ganganelli's Letters.

Some circumstances having taken place in the interior of the inn, a few hours before, with which it may be useful that the reader should be made acquainted; we will leave the travellers just at the point to which we have brought them at the close of the last chapter, for the purpose of introducing a new group of performers on the scene.

The kitchen, or principal apartment of the house, presented modes of accommodation by no means usual in a lonely abode of this class among the highlands of Erin. Although,

from its deserted and solitary position, it had appeared impossible that the chance custom of passing strangers could constitute a very considerable portion of the landlord's revenue, and the distance at which it stood from anything deserving the appellation of the word "neighbourhood," seemed to form sufficient grounds for supposing that the permanent customers could not be very numerous either—the appearance, nevertheless, which the interior presented was not such as to estimate any lack of company. It was abundantly though plainly supplied with articles of furniture, such as *sugaan* chairs, a table, settle-bed, wooden *dresser*, the shelves of which were well stocked with pewter dishes, plates, and wooden *piggins*, or drinking vessels. The rafters, well seasoned by the influence of a settled cloud of smoke, were graced with sundry flitches, hams, and other departments of bacon which were visible through the bluish mist, and from the many fresh indentures observable to the glance, gave the most direct negative that could be wished to the sneer of the apostate Goldsmith—or proved, at least, that this was not one of the "Irish houses where things are so-so." By the confused and rakish manner in which all the furniture, however, was tossed about—a chair lying prostrate in one corner—the table pushed awry, and strewed with drinking vessels, which appeared not to have been meddled with since they had fallen from the impotent and infirm grasp of the last toper—it would seem that the apartment had been made, a very short while before, the scene of a riotous merry-making. The fire yet lay mingled with the ashes into which it had been *raked* on the previous evening. A miserable half-burnt cat sat near the hearth, vainly employed in an endeavour to impart a degree of comeliness to her face by washing it with her feet, and sometimes casting a sleepy blinking stare on the dull embers before her. The shutters of the window being yet closed, admitted scarcely enough of the mid-day light to enable the drowsy inmates to distinguish the lateness of the

hour. A female figure, slipshod and in undress, glided into the apartment from an inner and still darker room, and often stumbling against various articles of furniture which were scattered on the earthen floor, and opening the window-shutter, used a gesture of astonishment as the bright noon-tide glory rushed in upon and around her. Raising her hand quickly to her eyes to protect and shade them from the effect of the dazzling light, and retiring from the spot, she proceeded, in some appearance of haste and anxiety, to re-establish a degree of order in the house. The woman was of a slight and perhaps graceful figure, although her hard discoloured skin, and bony wasted arms forbade the conjecture that she could, under any circumstances, lay claim to the praise of feminine loveliness—yet there was something both in her manner and her appearance which was calculated to attract the attention, if not to excite the interest, of the spectator. Her countenance was wasted and yellow—apparently rather from the influence of ill health, than of age or toil. Her long, dry, light-coloured hair, dabbled in dust and ashes, and hanging neglected about her sunken cheeks, and over her thin sinewy neck, would have given her an air altogether hideous, if its effect were not met and contradicted, by the expression of a full, soft, clear eye, which, the instant that it met the observation of the spectator, engrossed all his attention, and altogether abstracted it from the remainder of her person. A soiled white muslin wrapper buttoned up in front, and a pair of brownish, ashy, light slippers, constituted nearly all the visible portion of her costume.

While she was occupied in regulating the furniture, and brushing off the coat of turf ashes with which every article was covered, with the wing of a goose, a man made his appearance at the same inner room from which she had entered, and stood for a few moments lazily stretching himself on the threshold. From the way in which his dress hung about him—his neckcloth turned awry—his coat co-

vered with feathers and ashes, his knees unbuttoned, and his coarse gray woollen stockings "down gyved to his ankle" —it evidently appeared that he had retained the same habiliments during his nocturnal repose which he had worn on the previous day. The woman gazed at him for a moment with a slight emotion of that disgust which the "green and sober" look of the companion of an unlimited debauch is apt to excite in the mind of one not yet wholly inured by custom to the hideous and nauseating consequences of excess, when the gay and healthful morning light steals in upon the scene of revelry, and pours its rosy splendour over pale and yellow cheeks—dull, dim, and sleepless eyes —sickly and expiring lights, and all the disgusting details of a spectacle of prolonged indulgence. The individual here presented seemed to entertain a kind of unacknowledged sense of his own repulsive appearance, for he walked in a shuffling, yawning, shambling way, to the darkest side of the apartment, while the woman continued her occupation, turning away her eyes from his person, as if unwilling to contemplate, under circumstances so unfavourable, an object in which her affections had an interest. From the portrait we have given of the man, it may appear improbable that this should be the case, but we omitted to state, that no portion of the distaste which his costume and bearing on this occasion were calculated to excite, extended themselves to his person and features. The latter were, in fact, remarkably striking, and, perhaps, beautiful. His hair, short, curling, and glossy, revealed, by its perfectly classical disposition, the shape of a finely formed head, which it *fitted* with a Grecian exactness. His features, sharp and sudden in their expression, were rendered still more poignant and characteristic by the fire of a violent eye, of excelling darkness and brilliancy. His figure, rather low, though by no means stunted, was slight and muscular; and his limbs were set with that firmness and ease which renders the movement of a vigorous man a spectacle of so much delight

and beauty, even in moments of the most arduous exertion.

"Ye had a noisy night of it last night, Mark."

"Iss."

"I couldn't get the child quiet the whole night long, for the noise."

"I heard him indeed."

A pause.

"Are they to be here again to-night, Mark, darling?"

"Where else would you have 'em be?"

"And when are we to have peace and a quiet house? Or is the child to be brought up here in this way, and to be as bad—as—ourselves—in the end?"

A fierce look was the only answer which the man returned to this query, and both were again silent.

"What more of Mr. Kumba, Mark?" was the next question put by the woman.

It appeared as if, whither by accident or intention, she had now started a theme more likely to lead her companion into good humoured converse than the last, for he raised his head from its drooping, meditative posture, and his face brightened, as he replied:—

"We have him, heart, we have him. Come, sit near me, here on the settle, love, an' I'll tell you all about—how it was—an' every thing."

"You told me, I think, yesterday, when Maney O'Neil interrupted us, that he went that morning to Miss Byrne, and that she would have nothing to say to him."

"Because her friends would have nothing to say to him. He went, thinking himself sure of her, because her father wasn't in the way now."

The woman groaned.

"Young Kumba himself is, as we all know, a wild harum-skarum sort of a lad, and between us two, not at all likely ever to attain to a creature of that kind, white and delicate, and reared like a lady in all respects. So he has come into

my advice, not without a great deal of arguing, to take her whether she likes it or not. And he's to be here this evening, and I'm to take him abroad to make him known to the boys, Maney O'Neil, an' Awny Farrel, his man, and three more sperited lads that wouldn't fall back of any thing we propose."

"And when is it to be?"

"To-night—or never. Nothing like keeping time behind you—and that's what I said to you, the night in the sally grove estwards, when I had your hand in mine, and the horses waiting, and you wanted me to let it alone till mornen, till you'd see the old people once more, and leave a token on your dressing table for 'em, and I wouldn't stop an hour, and wasn't it well for us, for there was a watch set for you that very night."

The soft eyes of the female glistened and expanded on the speaker, but the sigh which accompanied the look of tenderness rendered it a doubtful matter whether she really did consider it as "well for her" that she had escaped the watch set for her on the occasion alluded to.

Before the conversation was renewed, a slight knocking at the door of the inn announced to the ear of the male speaker the approach of the young man whose affairs had constituted its chief topic. His dress, manner, and language were such as to place him, at first sight, in a superior point of view to those whose society he was about to seek, although those of the latter were not of the *very* lowest grade, and there seemed to be in the manner of his greeting, as he entered, an unconquerable and involuntary consciousness of self-abasement, though so fleeting and so slightly marked that the quick eye of the host could not, had he been so inclined, arrest it with sufficient certainty to take offence. Before we proceed to lay the consequences of his arrival before the reader, it may not be amiss to enter once more into detail on the character and fortunes of the new-comer.

Robert Kumba, the youngest son of a comfortable farmer

in the neighbourhood of the inn, was one of those anomalous personages whose characters are made up of a series of paradoxes. He was shy, to the appearance of a reprehensible timidity, and yet daring to a degree beyond rashness itself, both in the formation and the execution of any design in which his happiness was at all involved—unsatisfied with ordinary means, and still more so with ordinary ends, seeking for higher, yet unequal to these—scrupulous to a perfect exactness in all transactions where his heart exercised no influence over his conscience, but frequently led into the wildest and most apparently dishonest practices, by mistaking the arguments of passion and feeling for those of reason—sensitive even to *finery*, when tried with moderate and limited excitements, yet easily capable of being wrought up into a savage disregard of all social and moral restraint when heated by a skilfully-used and violent impulse—suspicious in the minutest trifles, yet flinging himself and his fortunes with the most unguarded confidence on the chance-honesty of a stranger whom his enthusiasm or his weakness of mind led him to select as a friend, untried and unknown—proud, fierce, and irritable, when any, even of those who might reasonably claim such a right, attempted to assert a natural dominion over him, yet submitting himself with a voluntary, and sometimes almost a pitiable docility to the guidance of a man who was his inferior in rank and education, and whose only advantage, in point of intellect, was in the possession of that quality which Iago so flatteringly and falsely attributed to his Venetian dupe, Roderigo, a firm and resolute "purpose."

Circumstances had contributed to render the character of the young man more positive and confirmed, at the same time that none of its contrarieties had been blended or softened down by the lapse of years and the growth of experience. His family, of which, as I have before mentioned, he was the youngest member, was numerous; and being placed precisely in that rank of life in which appearances are con-

sulted with the greatest anxiety, as one of the tangible modes of rendering its position, with respect to the relations of society above and below it, less equivocal, their humble means were tasked to an extent which made it absolutely necessary that a mortifying privation should fall on some, or all. Little Bob felt the influence of this necessity before he was able to remonstrate against its particular application to himself. By a course of reasoning very pardonable, if not free from error, his older friends and protectors measured his wants by their own estimation of his claims, and they would, in all probability, have laughed at the idea of taking the little urchin's feelings into account. It was by no means, therefore, considered either unwise or unreasonable that Bob, about whom nobody cared, should run barefoot, while the extremities of his elders, who had began to assume a place in the consideration of their neighbours, were vested in the shining luxury of polished calf-skin and lambs-wool; nor for the same reason did any of his friends question the propriety of allowing Bob's little bandle-cloth shirt to hail the light of day through the fissures which time had made in the elbows of his coarse frieze jacket, while the well-ironed and neatly-frilled inner garments of his brother were protected by a yearly suit of glossy broad-cloth, illuminated with rows of the most resplendent gilt buttons, and modelled after the most approved specimens which the capital of the country (the emporium of all fashion and taste in costume) could supply. The very circumstance, moreover, of the mortifying distinction which was thus unwarily drawn between him and his brothers, subjected him to what his boyish spirit felt to be still further degradation; and his ragged and neglected appearance seemed, in the eyes of his philosophic friends, to afford good reason for employing him in many menial offices about the farm, which would otherwise have been allotted to a menial, or shared with him by the other members of the household. "Bob is not dressed, so he can help to foot the turf."—"Bob has no shoes nor white

stockings on, so he can turn home the cows."—"Bob will run to the village for——" whatever it might be "for nobody will remark *his* carrying a bundle," were sounds no less familiar to the ears than grating to the feeling of the boy—although the custom which he had been in from his infancy of taking upon trust the opinions of those above him, and adopting them without consideration, prevented his once entertaining a suspicion of the justice of any arrangement of the kind. His parents were the best-meaning people in the world, but they laid, without being aware of it, a train of circumstances very sufficient to darken a character of a much gayer and less sensitive nature than that of the subject on which they now practised. According as his mind filled and strengthened, and began to originate its own sensations, the peculiarities of his situation pressed upon him with increasing acuteness. He began to ponder on the cause, as well as to fret and chafe at the effect. The circumstance of his natural guardians' having neglected to furnish him with the means of appearing on an equality with his friends, did not any longer appear a quite satisfactory reason for depriving him of their society when any prospect of amusement or advantage called them from home; or if it did appear so, his anger now referred itself from the privation to its apology, and found quite as exciting and irritating a subject in the one as in the other. The comparatively slighting and careless manner, moreover, in which he was regarded by the visiters of the house, and the occasional stare of contemptuous scrutiny which he underwent from the rude eye of a stranger, rankled in his soul and turned all the current of his thoughts and feelings to gall and vinegar. A young and ardent mind has arrived at a terrific crisis when it begins to suspect that it is treated with injustice or neglect; and more especially if that injustice is inflicted by those on whom it is dependent for instruction and support, and who are, by the authority with which they are invested, exempt from the possibility of remonstrance. Naturally of a shy and

reserved habit, the course of life which we have been describing, was highly calculated to increase the timidity and consequent susceptibility of character which young Kumba already manifested—and this apparent blocking up of every avenue through which his feelings, dark, light, dangerous, or laudable as they were, might find their way to the observation of those whose censure or approval could have any influence upon them—threw the youth back upon himself, and forced him upon habits of brooding and gloomy meditation which laid the foundation of many a black design and many a wretched hour in his after life. Before we dismiss the subject of his education, one observation may be allowed on a very general mistake which is made with respect to childish reserve and backwardness. We have seen it usually commended by teachers and guardians as indicative of gentleness and a proper docility of temper, most probably for the obvious reason that such children occasion them least vexation and annoyance at the moment; but it by no means follows that the quality, though convenient, is at all beneficial or estimable. Every possible means should be put in use for the purpose of drawing a child in whom this disposition to secrecy is observed, into a bold and frank habit of declaring his mind on all occasions; and this habit would be very lightly purchased by the omission of punishment for certain instances of mischief or criminality. An over-bold, noisy, passionate disposition in a child, is always safer than a temper too easily governable and ductile. It is the business of education to restrain, direct, and expunge, but it can never supply a positive want in character.

It was with the result of all the unhappy influences we have been detailing, fresh upon him, that the mild and the mettled, the soft-worded and the violent, the crouching and the fiery, the confident and the suspicious, the shy, and shrinking, and daring youth of whom we speak, found himself, with all his crudeness of heart and mind, established,

by one of those impossible accidents which occur every day, in the possession of that property on which he had been suffered to vegetate from his childhood. It will not be difficult to suppose, that as his fortunes thus suddenly outstript his expectations, so they found him unfitted, from inexperience as well as indisposition, for the management of the means which they placed under his government. Miscalculation of their extent was the obvious and immediate evil; and the unsettled and wavering mind of the young proprietor precluded all hope of an industrious inquiry in that particular, or a persevering and rational system in their application. A few years of expense and indolence, or rather fitful and misdirected exertion, did all for the farm which indolence *could* have done; and Kumba, almost before his minority was ended, found himself the possessor of, or rather the responsible agent for a ruined and encumbered property;—neglected by his acquaintances, censured, and *only* censured, by his friends, once more flung back upon himself; and more—far more—than all, rejected with a wholesome and almost laudable spirit of displeasure from one house, which contained for him an object of the most stirring ambition which had ever been excited within his soul, after the degradation of unsuccessful solicitation, and by one in whose eyes he had, in times of greater happiness and prosperity, read a promise of a kinder and more enduring interest.

This last blow, which he could not bring himself to consider as other than undeserved, succeeded in unsettling the purposes and pursuits of the young man He was now placed in a more immediately dangerous position than when he lived in a state of dependence on the will of others; for although the world might exercise just that degree of influence over him, which made him keenly sensible of its injustice, it could not govern the consequences of that sensibility. The most immediate was a seeking to supply, by the excessive use of every species of mere vulgar excitement,

the loss of that tender and delicious incentive, upon which his spirit had lived for years; and, finding himself, as we have before stated, shut out by his unfortunate circumstances from that society to which he had lately been accustomed, and to which his habits and his feelings induced him to cling most affectionately, the natural result was his reasoning himself into a toleration of any whatsoever, in which he could secure himself a place. This great imprudence met with a fatal retribution. Among the many low fellows who sought, yet vainly, to fasten themselves upon his regard, the fiery young man who now rose to bid him welcome beneath his roof, and in whose character, at least, though not in his habits of life, he had found many traits of resemblance to his own, succeeded in fixing a single claim on his attention. This person, however, had a great advantage, so far as the heart's ease was concerned, over his superior friend (for such he speedily became), in his perfect freedom from, and almost ignorance of, all those delicate susceptibilities and compunctions which education, no less than nature, had breathed into the soul of the latter; and he found, consequently, much less difficulty in complying with the violent impulses which were common to both. Few descriptions of characters are more likely to acquire an influence over an unformed and self-diffident mind, than one of a more vigorous and persevering energy; and the contact between two such spirits is dangerous or fortunate, precisely in relation to the good or evil nature of that which is in the ascendant. Our readers may ere now have conjectured, and not unwisely, that the character of the young landlord was not such as to render a conjunction indicative of very great benefit to Kumba. Spellacy, who, from some motive which it is not necessary here to explain, seemed to look on his new associate as one whose co-operation might be of incalculable importance to his own designs, managed their acquaintance with the art of a master. Never presuming to affect anything like a consciousness of the influence which

he was acquiring most rapidly over the mind of his companion, he was, on all occasions, when the absence of a potent stimulus left the reason of the other at liberty to discriminate and decide, the humble and parasitical dependant —honoured by the presence of his superior—governed, or seeming to be governed by his breath—gratified by his converse—grateful for his friendship—all, in fact, that Kumba's vanity could desire; and it was only when he had flung the latter off his guard, when he had startled him with some astounding difficulty, oftentimes existing only in the lying imagination that had framed it, that he assumed the privilege of leading the way, and gained himself credit for genius as well as intrepidity—that he dared to point out his course to his superior—to fill his ears with the accents of command —to say "Do this!" without qualification, and it was done.

Far, far, by this artful and sinuous course, had the ruffian succeeded in conducting his dupe from the equator of moral rectitude, before the evening on which both have been presented to the acquaintance of the reader. He had not yet, however, ventured to propose to him a participation in any act of foul and positive guilt; but the last train which he had laid was so perfectly skilful and deceptive as to place the youth entirely within the dominion of his temper. The circumstances, at least as much of them as is needed to make the narrative comprehensible, may be gathered from the scene which followed.

As soon as Mrs. Spellacy, in obedience to a slight action from her husband, had left the room, Kumba, who till that moment remained half dubious of his course, holding the open door in one hand, and gazing intently into the eyes of his host, nodded, as we have before mentioned, with a very slight air of superiority, and passing in silence to the centre, took one of the rude chairs which lay scattered about, and sat for several minutes in apparently a total recklessness of the presence of a second person, During this mood, the observer maintained a respectful and delicate silence, wan-

dering about the room with noiseless steps, to arrange a fishing rod, or examine some domestic utensil; occasionally directing a glance, into which he contrived to throw all the interest and humble attachment which he was capable of assuming, at the contemplative and rapidly changing countenance of his friend. One of these glances, at length, as was the intention of the man, met the eye of the latter, and the effect which it produced was as he desired.

"Well! Spellacy, what is your genius now to do for me? I come to you, a ruined man, to tell you that your scheme has failed, and I am now left without one hope in the world. I have a great deal to say to you, Spellacy, on the subject of these repeated disappointments. I do not suspect your sincerity, but I think you careless of my fortunes, and that, with your professions, is little better than foul play. Never look upon me—what I have said, I say. You told me yesterday that you had laid a plan which could not fail to restore me to all I had lost, and you made my head dizzy with hope. You sported with me, sir—you mocked me. I have been disappointed."

"Great Heaven!" Spellacy exclaimed, drawing back with a stare of confusion and dismay, blended with an expression of deep dejection. The emotion was sufficiently well counterfeited to impose on Kumba, who thought he could discern, moreover, a certain degree of self-reproach in the attitude, downcast and drooping, in which his friend remained—his hands clasped, and hanging down before him—his mouth agape, and his black eyes fixed on the ground with the air of one who has received news of a sudden misfortune from a quarter to which he looked for joyous intelligence.

"For my part, Spellacy," the young man continued, "I do not come to ask you to tax your ingenuity for any new advice. All is over with me now, and I only seek you for the purpose of laying before you my intention; for I have at last formed a design for myself. And first hear

me. You know that it is to me you owe this house in which you dwell, and all that you possess."

"I am proud to own it, Mr. Kumba, I am proud to own it."

"You came to me poor, destitute, and moneyless—and you came to me in a lucky hour. I had just received Mrs. Byrne's cold-hearted letter, in which she bargained with so much keen-sighted precision for the exact quantum of prudence and good behaviour which was to entitle me once more to a re-admission into their family circle. You found me endeavouring to drown the consciousness of the heartless repulse in the fumes of strong drink. You seized the moment—you told me that a lovely girl had eloped with you from the comforts of a wealthy home, and that you had not one guinea in the world to secure her even the means of subsistence for a week. There was some story about your losses, too. You told me, I think, that you had been reduced to that extreme poverty by having had the misfortune to fall in with the remnant of Redmond O'Hanlon's gang, who had taken up their residence for some time in this part of the country, and who, by the way, are strongly suspected of being the fabricators and utterers of the false coin that has spread to such an extent through our towns and villages, although every attempt to discover their retreat has been hitherto unavailing."

Spellacy here turned aside for the purpose of concealing a smile, which he seemed unable wholly to suppress.

"My heart," Kumba continued, "torn and wounded as it was with its own injuries, was open to your plea; and, what perhaps was more to the purpose in your eyes, my purse was open also."

"It was—I freely own, sir," said the other, "I freely own it, Mr. Kumba."

"Well," said the young man, "since that time, you have been forming plan after plan, to enable me to carry into effect the views which you knew I entertained, with respect

to that dear—but rigidly righteous being—and every scheme has ended in fixing my despair upon me more firmly than ever. I will not suspect your truth. I believe you really were grateful—but you have brought me to the gates of ruin, and I will take the liberty of lifting the latch without your assistance. I have resolved on selling off the remainder of my little property, and purchasing a pair of colours with the product. I am careless now of life or fortune, and had rather die in the noise and tumult of a camp, than let sorrow waste me to death in this desert. I have not forgotten you, however. You meant well, Spellacy, although you were not so successful as I could have wished; and I have, therefore, taken care to secure the leasehold of your house and small farm to you, for the original term of my holding. Here is the instrument."

"You had always a generous heart, Mr. Kumba," said Spellacy, whose manner expressed at once satisfaction at the gift, and alarm at the step that Kumba meditated, and which appeared likely to thwart most effectually the progress of his own designs; "but surely, sir, I haven't heard you rightly. Go into the army! And is that the way you'll give her up, after all that has been done—and with the fairest chances in your favour, that mortal man could wish for? Let me know the cause, sir, at any rate; what is it that has made you give up all hope at once, that way. I heard to a certainty that Miss Byrne would pass through the sally grove this morning. I knew how much one word from you to herself, face to face, would do to soften her heart towards you once more; and at any rate, I was quite certain, that she would not be angry at just being forced to go off, if it was necessary, and so I sent word to you about it; but I suppose she didn't come, by what you say?"

"She did not. On the contrary, I discovered that she had received, by some unknown hand, an intimation of my design. I thought you would keep the secret better, Spellacy."

"Me keep it!" the other replied, in some confusion. "Human ears did not hear me breathe a word of it, except the pair that belonged to Awney Farrel, who carried you my message—and if I thought he——O, but that's impossible."

"I do not charge him with treachery. However, no matter where the treason lies, my doom is sealed, at all events. I will not run the risk of farther disappointment. Suspense is worse than hanging."

"Why should you say any such thing, sir? Is that acting either with sense or spirit? There is one of the most beautiful creatures that ever walked the ground, dying for you, and you talk of leaving her and the country for ever, on account of a little difficulty thrown in your way by her friends! Think for a moment, what a prize it is you are leaving after you."

"Have you ever seen her then?" said Kumba, encouraging the subject, in the manner of one who was not unwilling to be dissuaded.

"I saw her," Spellacy replied, "on an occasion that I never will forget. It was on the first of May, when the mummers of our village stopped on the lawn before Drumscanlon, her father's house, and the family came out upon the field to see our dance. Miss Byrne herself was——but I beg pardon, sir; I'm interfering with your time."

"Go on," saidKumba, "I could hear you speak on that theme until my hairs were gray."

"Miss Byrne herself," Spellacy resumed, "was dressed in her fine flowered-silk gown (a thing that would stand on the ground of itself), and her red, gold laced Spanish-leather shoes, as small as robin-redbreast's—her fine scarlet silk stockings with silver clocks—her darling real Spanish cloth jacket, fastened over her bosom so handsomely with ribbons—and on her fine lady-like head, so stately and so sweet at the same time, her beaver hat with the beautiful silver-lace trimming and the buckle!—Well 'twas a sight

for a king to look at. And with all that now, she had no more pride than an infant. She talked to us all, just as if she took a delight to see us that way, dancing about the Maypole. And she gave her hand to myself with such a smile, when I asked her just for one turn of a slip jig, just to have it to say. And she did dance in style. O, the cutting—and the shuffling—and the pretty little quibbling o' the feet over the ground!"

"You speak as if you were in love yourself," said Kumba.

"Me in love!" Spellacy replied, starting in some confusion; "O that's all over with me now, sir, I have only the one love, and I desire no more." [This was said in a loud tone, evidently with the intention of being heard in the next room.] "Herself is listening to us," he added in a low voice, nodding his head aside towards the room door, with a knowing smile and wink. "No, Mr. Kumba; but I thought then, and I often thought since, what a happiness it would be to your tenants, and to us all, if they could have such a mistress over 'em. What a delight it would be, if we could all meet that way once a year before your own door, to see you come out and join the dancers, with that beautiful young lady locking arms* with you. And she'd be a treasure to any man too, for, let alone her beauty, there isn't a better housekeeper in the country, I hear.'

Kumba paused for some time, and sighed in secret, while he ran over in his mind the picture of rural happiness which Spellacy had presented to it, and which he had often before, in days of prouder hope, loved to summon up and contemplate, as the ideal of his own ambition.

"If there was a possibility of its accomplishment," said he—"but why will you vex me by those idle dreams? Her father is dead—and cannot recall the pledge which he extorted from her in dying, that she would never more receive me to her confidence. Her cold and formal mother is confirmed in her hatred of me by the line of conduct which

* Leaning on him.

I have pursued—and I have not the remotest hope of being able to tempt her to disobedience. They want me to toil like Jacob for seven years, and to prove myself a true penitent. I am not one of those cold and patient spirits—I cannot wait day after day to gratify a humour that may change and deceive me after all. They have made me desperate, and I had rather now risk all on one bold cast, than throw up the tables and repair my losses by tardy industry, as they desire."

"If you are disposed that way, sir," said Spellacy, with some hesitation, "there is one way left that would be certain enough, I think, but I was loath to propose it to you, as it is more violent and dangerous than I believed would please you."

"I shall like it the better," said Kumba, "what is it?"

"It is too long now to talk of, sir, but if you'll meet me this evening, late, say about seven o'clock, at the Rath on the hill above, I'll explain everything to you, and we'll set about it as soon as can be. Stop! Who is it that's knocking?"

The interruption was occasioned by the arrival of the travellers, and the tintinabulary application of the handle of the old Palatine's whip to the plain unpanelled door.

"Travellers!" said Spellacy to himself, after he had peeped through the window; "a new decoy of Awney Farrel's, I suppose. Come away, out the back door, Mr. Kumba, for 'twould be as well, may be, if you weren't seen by 'em. Mrs. Spellacy, look to the door, honey, and attend to the travellers. Mr. Kumba, you won't forget seven o'clock—at the Rath."

"I'll be punctual," said Kumba, as he closed the door behind him.

"Now," Spellacy continued, turning with sudden energy to his wife, as she made her appearance from the inner room, "you'll not forget our usual plan. Those appear to be comfortable people, and you know we are reduced to our

last shifts. You will see whether they are armed, and take care to provide against that mischief."

"More guilt!" exclaimed the woman, "more blood! Oh, Mark, when will our measure be completed?"

"Poh! no blood, fool," exclaimed the man, "I wish to prevent it. Listen to me. Do as I desire you to do this one night, and I never again will ask you to serve me in the same manner."

"If I could believe this——"

"Here is my hand and word."

"I have no choice but to take it," said the woman. "The time is gone by when I could have made one."

"What do you say that for now?" said Spellacy, fiercely. "Didn't you know who you were marrying when you came with me?"

"Yes, Mark—but—" here she hesitated, as if unwilling to hazard the whole truth.

"Oh, I understand you," said Spellacy. "You didn't know *all*—you didn't know what a complete ruffian I was. You thought you were only marrying your father's sworn enemy—you were very ready to destroy the old man's comfort for ever, but you had no notion that you were risking your own—and now you have found it out, you are sorry for it."

The woman bowed her head in deep feeling, as if she would say—"I am answered, I deserve this;" and before Spellacy could add another word, the knocking at the door was repeated. Softening the effect of his last speech with a few words of rough kindness, and charging her not to neglect his injunction, he hastened through the same door by which Kumba had taken his departure.

CHAPTER V.

"Who puts a doublet on a horse—
Or on a man a saddle—
Or claps a stocking on his head—
Sure that man's brain is addle!
Then let not men ungifted paddle
In streams of sanctuary—
Teach without knowledge—basely meddle
With what their heads can't carry."
Cobbler of Preston.

Mrs. Spellacy hurried to admit the company. The old Palatine first entered, and was closely followed by his companion, the preacher, whose immense proportions darkened the doorway so completely as to leave little opportunity, for the moment, of observing or acknowledging the courtesy with which they were both received by the good lady.

"Peace be on this house!" said the preacher. "Woman, what have you for dinner?"

"Travellers I brought you, Mrs. Spellacy," said the poor scholar. Then apart to her, "Tell Suil Dhuv I gev de note to Miss Byrne's man."

Abie Switzer's salutation was a mute nod, and a most extraordinary contortion of the face, which he would perhaps have been surprised to hear, was more like a grin than a smile.

"Come, come, my good woman, stir yourself a little," said the old Palatine; "get these gentlemen something to amuse themselves with as they desire—and show me to a room, where I may lie at full length for half an hour; my old bones are aching with fatigue."

The woman glanced listlessly from one to another of the speakers, while her thoughts were evidently yet wandering after those who had just departed, and whose conversation, overheard as it had been, contained matter of, to her, a far more absorbing interest. The Palatine was obliged to repeat his request for a separate chamber.

"The parlour is this way, sir," she replied, still abstractedly—"there's an old bed in it." And having placed the materials of a plain dinner on the table, in a manner so careless and absent, as to draw down some very severe though silent reprehensions from her sectarian guest, with respect to her total inaptitude for her calling—she conducted Mr. Segur into the room to which she had pointed. The preacher, unwilling to leave any portion of his time unoccupied, set himself with a very commendable industry to complete the dinner arrangements—observing wittily, that "the beef, for country beef, was very passable"—while Abie went to look after the horses; and their thin-faced guide, whose finances obliged him to wait the summons of his superior, before he ventured to incur the expense of so unusual a luxury as a good dinner, sat by the fire, rubbing his hands, and directing, in the intervals of some snatches of merry talk, a glance of intense interest and admiration towards the board where the worthy preacher was signalizing himself by a display of really extraordinary prowess—watching, as a well-regulated house-dog might be expected to do, every mouthful of provision that was sacrificed—following it with his eyes from the dish to the plate—from the plate to the fork—undergoing the stimulating application of mustard and salt—then the delicious ablution in the lake of rich gravy—and subsequently in its upward flight, until it disappeared behind the ivory portcullis of the hero of the board—while the observer's own jaws opened and shut with an involuntary and sympathetic action—closing, however, like those of a Shacabac, upon a vision of unsubstantial air.

"Where's de little master?" he at length exclaimed, looking gaily about him, as the lucky thought suggested itself—"Ha, are you dere, sir? are you? High jockey! here sir," stretching out his arms to a fine, sturdy little boy, who came crowing and tottering from an inner room. "Dere he was—dere he was—de tief! Come here now,—ride a cock horse!—here—put your foot upon my toe—give me

de hands—de two little fat paws de wor!—dat's it! Up we go. Hoo-ee hoo-ee! heigh jockey—ho! ho-ho-ho-ho! Dat's it. Sit down here upon my knee.—Cetchee! Cetchee! Cetchee! O de 'eetle tief he was—and de 'ittle fat neck he had—and de two blue eyes, like de moder—two beautyful eyes—Creep mouse—creep mouse—O! ho-ho-ho-ho! Come, where's de song? Come, now—stop de laugh, and give us de song. Come on—sing—don't be afeerd o' de geutleman—open de 'ittle mouth and sing—

"My father died, I don't know how;
He left me a sixpence just to guide de plough.
Wit my whim wham waddle, O!
Jack straw straddle, O!
Pretty boy bubble, O!
Under de broom."

Mr. Shine here found sufficient time, while occupied in transferring the fourth reinforcement of cold roast mutton from the dish to his plate, for an observation—

"The infant memory of that child," he said, "might be stocked with words of greater profit, than those idle rhymes" Then after a pause—"Some of the steeple divines think otherwise: to wit, that member of the established church, who, at a very late period, excited so great a sensation in the metropolis of the kingdom, by his strenuous opposition to the introduction of the brazen coinage, for the patent had been accorded unto the man, Wood. I allude to a man of whom you, in your station, may be ignorant—the dean, as he is entitled by those of his belief, of St. Patrick's Church—Jonathan Swift—who hath employed a portion of time which he might have turned to far better uses, in composing certain ridiculous verses for the service of the nursery—replete with nothing salutary or instructive." By this time the Doctor had replenished the plate which was before him; but, unwilling to relinquish the subject upon which he had launched—he continued speaking, interrupting himself at each of the breaks, thus... ..which follow, in his speech,

for the purpose of administering yet further consolation to the interior—" nothing salutary or instructive—but formed altogether of a certain absurd and nonsensical combination of unmeaning terms—to wit:

'Here we go up, up, up .....
And here we go down—down—downy—
Here we go backward and forward—
And.....heigh for Dublin towny—'

and the like. And this.....—this is the man....., who has all 'Dublin towny'—to use his own .....ridiculous phrase, congregated in his.....track, with shouts and applanses which they would not accord to Swedenborg himself, if he sojourned amongst them—"

"Gondoutha!" interposed the apparently edified and admiring guide.

"For my.....for my part—I am of opinion, that.. .....my lord Carteret, with all his worldly civility, will make the dean repent his *brazen* interference in.....so unclerical an affair. For I am convinced by the report of Isaac Newton, though he differ from me on many points of faith, as one by his office in the mint necessarily skilled in all varieties of metal coins and medals—that the man Wood hath worthily approved his trust."

"O, dere is no doubt o' dat," said the guide, tossing his head in the manner of one who speaks of a thing assured —then resting his head on the soft neck of the child, and turning his eyes downwards towards the fire, he hummed, in a very low murmuring key, the following words of a ballad then popular in a certain part of Ireland—and which, in all probability, some of my readers may recognise:—

'Come hidder and try,
I'll teach you to buy
A pot o' good ale for a farden—
Come—tredpince a score,
I ask you no more,
And a fig for de Draper and Harding!"

Mr. Shine's eyes first dilated in astonishment, and then contracted with as much of darkening scrutiny as the fleshy protuberances around them could be made to assume, upon his humble companion. It may be useful to say, that the preacher's opinions on Wood's celebrated brass coinage—a subject of which he knew no more than it was impossible for any but a deaf man to avoid learning—were entirely modelled from his religious influences—and he needed no more than the whispered report which had reached him of the name of the real author of the Drapier's letters—to decide his judgment at once, and array all the little argument he possessed on the opposite side of the question. Few opportunities, however, were afforded of achieving anything like a triumph for his gratuitously assumed opinions in his converse with the city people, every one of whom was as familiar with every possible hue and form of the subject as with the faces of his family. It was something like a gratification to him, therefore, to light upon even this poor youth, whom he easily calculated on impressing with what opinion he pleased, and from whom, in this wild region, he did not certainly expect to meet with this gentle sneer—indicating at once a superior acquaintance with the subject, and a settled conviction in the other way.

The lad did not appear to observe the effect which he had produced on the mind of the preacher, but recommenced his noisy play with the lively child, whom he still held on his knee—intermingling the "combination of unmeaning and ridiculous terms" with sundry sly hints, which would have succeeded even with the phlegmatic Doctor, if they had been addressed to him at a less interesting moment:—

"Look at de gentleman—now—do—who is dat? who is dat dere? What's dat? what do you say? O you tief! He's aten all de beef and de mutton intirely, is he? O, have manners, master! O fie, sir! Av he ates de mutton, he has de money to pay for it, and dat's what he got

be his learnen'—be his minden his A, b, ab—an' his e, b, eb,—an' his b, a, ba—and his b, e, bay—and every whole tote dat way. And do you mind 'em, sir, an' you'll be like him, haven' money to spend for what you like best, and enoof o' dat to lave for the smart boy dat would be showen' you over de wild mountain in an evenen', and would be hungry for his dinner may be, and not haven' de price of it in his pocket—so he wouldn't—"

Although no impression was yet produced by these manœuvres, which could be discerned on the equable and distended countenance of the preacher, it is impossible to say with what success they might have been ultimately attended, had not a new and most startling interruption cut short the design of the operator. A scream—wild, piercing, and spirit-riving—such as might be imagined of the possessed, whose heart was torn by the departing fiend at the command of Him whom "they knew,"—one long-continued and shrilly note of sudden agony rung through the house, and transfixed the hearing of its inmates. The young man quickly put down the child, and started to his feet. Even the fat Shine followed the example, and sprung—no—*clambered* to a standing posture—his eyes staring and protruded—and his fair rosy hue changed to a purple-pale—one hand grasping the back of the hay-bottomed chair, and the other elevating a fork, on the points of which the untasted particle of roast meat remained impaled. The sound which occasioned their alarm proceeded from the chamber into which the landlady and Mr. Segur had retired.

Suddenly, and with the rapidity of thought, the figure of the woman was seen darting through the still open door. She cast one swift and shuddering glance behind her, again darted forward—struck her bosom with a maniac violence—looked wildly around her, like one in search of some place of swift concealment—gaped on the two astonished guests—on the child—pressed her expanded hand on her brow—on her heart—sighed heavily and repeatedly—tossed back

her hair from about her face—then clasped her hands together—wrung them above her head—and with a renewed scream of anguish, if possible more harrowing than the last, dashed herself headlong against the closed door of the bedroom on the opposite side. It yielded, with a crash of wrenched and frittered latches, to the wild assault, and she disappeared in the darkness.

For a few moments all again was perfect stillness. The preacher and his companion remained staring on one another in all the helplessness of astonishment and ignorance, and the child gazed in anxious silence from one to another, until at length, unable to account in any way for this unusual conduct in its mother, the little creature set up a passionate clamour of tears and lamentations, which in a little time recalled them to their senses. Both turned their eyes on Segur, who now made his appearance at the door of the parlour, with a countenance of still more vivid alarm and astonishment than they seemed themselves to feel; as if expecting from him some explanation of the mystery which perplexed them.

Nothing, however, was revealed in the series of inquiries which ensued. The old man was as ignorant of the cause of the poor woman's agitation as those who were in the outer room. He had flung himself on the bed, after shortly conversing with her on some indifferent subject, in the course of which she had evinced a great deal of listlessness and inattention. Wearied as he had been, he was in the act of dozing before she left him, and while she was yet occupied, as he believed, in some arrangement at another end of the room, when that piercing cry, the effect of which on his hearing he could compare to nothing less than the passing of a small sword through his brain, startled him from his slumber. As he sprung from his bed and gazed around him, he beheld the woman in the act of flitting through the doorway, with the same frantic action which had amazed the

guests in the outer-chamber. And this was all the information which he could give them on the subject.

"An *apparrishun* she seen, I'll go bail," said the guide.

"Truce with your levity, fellow," said the Palatine, with a sternness which at once banished the smile from the other's countenance, and drew forth an humble apology. Then turning toward the still open door of the bedroom, he continued—"I am unwilling to let the affair rest here. The good woman may do herself a mischief."

"O don't, sir—don't—for the bare life!" said the lad, in a loud and earnest whisper, as he saw Segur moving toward the bedroom. "I know the place and her ways better, and I'll see after her meself."

He was prevented by the re-entrance of the woman. She stood a moment at the door, gazed firmly, with an expression of devouring inquiry, successively on each of the travellers, and then, in silence, and with the unconscious loftiness of carriage into which the humblest and gentlest natures may be struck by the application of some powerful excitation, she put her extended hand against the breast of the youth, removed him from her way, and walked forward slowly, and with a steadiness, in which only their observation of her movements during the previous scene could enable the beholders to distinguish the calmness of high-wrought passion, governed and restrained by its own energy, from the repose of a spirit perfectly at peace.

"I ask your pardon for disturbing you, sir," she said to Segur, "and I would not have done so if I could have helped it, but this youth—" laying her hand on the shoulder of the poor scholar, while she continued gazing on Segur—"this youth knows my infirmity. Will you sleep again? The footsteps of a mouse shall not disturb you. Sleep, and I will sit on the threshold of your door myself, and watch every stir and motion about the house till you wake."

"I thank you very much," said the old man, a little touched by the earnestness of her apology, "but there is no

occasion for so much care. I am used to hard beds and rough usage enough, so that I can promise myself a very sound sleep if I were sure of hearing no more such music as *that*."

"They shall tear my heart out before you hear a murmur," said the poor woman. "Do—take your rest—sleep—and see this—see!" plucking a huge woollen cloak from the back of Mr. Shine, dragging it impatiently through the hands of the latter, without seeming to bestow a thought on him as he made a slight effort to retain his property—"See! I will spread this over you when you lie down, and I'll draw the little dimmity curtain between you and the window, to keep the light from your eyes—and I'll watch by your bed-side if you wish, and I'll not cry out again if my heart was on fire."

"Nay, nay, my good woman, you are perfectly welcome to act as you please, if you should be used so hardly as that; but give Mr. Shine his coat again for I don't want it."

"Let him stand in his fat garment of flesh," said the woman, with a tone of bitter contempt; "let him sit there in the midst of his own mountain of gross substance, built on his bones out of lean fools. The raw wind that pierces the marrow of the old man, might bluster and chafe upon that heated and shaking lump of earth without doing any more harm than warming and quickening the red currents within it, while yours were frozen and driven back upon your old heart."

"I desire, woman," said Segur, greatly offended, "that you will do as you are directed; and it would become you, unfortunate creature, to obtain the forgiveness of that worthy man, for the profane insolence of which you have been guilty."

In the instant, and before the last word had passed the lip of the speaker, the cloak was replaced on the shoulders of the bewildered Shine, while the woman, with a trembling and officious eagerness, fastened it about his neck,

clasped her hands, and, sinking at his feet, solicited his pardon with so rapid and affecting a change of tone and manner, and such a repentant vehemence of action, that the great cheeks of the doctor (who like most fat men had his proportion of good-nature) shook with emotion, and his eyes glistened with moisture, as he was about to pat her on the head, with a word of encouragement and forgiveness. The intention, however, was as much as the penitent seemed to require, for she instantly sprung to her feet again, turned her back on the doctor, as if no such person were in existence, and, laying her hand on the arm of the old man, hurried him into the parlour.

The preacher turned round, while his eyes were still directed in amazement toward the parlour, to the thin-faced lad. He found the latter, however, had been much more profitably occupied than in attending to the preceding scene. He had slipped quietly into the preacher's chair, and busied himself with the utmost eagerness in completing the task which the other had left unfinished

"Eat, friend," said the preacher, after pausing and staring on the lad for a few moments, "eat, and be filled. Let no respect of persons abash or trouble you in the performance of a needful duty."

There was little occasion for the advice. The lad did not even suspend his operations to say a word of acknowledgment, but merely nodded, steadily returned the stare of the honest divine, and made a kind of soldier-like salute with the knife, as he was about to plunge it once more into the nut-brown surface of the *roti*, in the side of which he had speedily effected an excavation that attracted the admiration even of Shine himself.

Both remained gazing on one another in silence for a few minutes, when a third mute made his appearance on the scene. Mr. Shine's attention was first attracted to him by the action of the young guide. The latter suddenly suspended his operations at the board, started from his

seat, looked full on the stranger, nodded his head towards Shine, slapped his pocket, tossed his hands high above his head, and darted by the man toward the back-door, the same by which Kumba and Spellacy had departed, and by which this new comer had entered. As he stood on the threshold, half out, half in, he said, in a jeering tone:

"Well! you'll not part the 'gits?"

"Aih?"

"Aih, yourself! Won't you part the ingits?"

"Och!——Noa!"

The door was instantly slapped to by the departing guide with a burst of contemptuous laughter.

Shine now gazed on the stranger. He was an exceedingly tall, awkwardly constructed fellow—presenting, as he stood bolt upright near the door, returning Shine's open stare with an air of perfectly stupid sheepishness, his long gaunt arms hanging before him, and his bony, coarse, and huge-knuckled fingers emp'oyed in beating time upon the front of a patched and glossy pair of corduroy "small-clothes"—presenting, we say, a picture of helpless and anxious stupidity, which perhaps could not approach a shade nearer to the verge of positive idiotey than it did; and which, by the very lingering hue of reason which formed the distinction, was more striking and pitiable in its effect than the absolute consummation of imbecility would have been.

"Who was that left us, friend?" said Mr. Shine, after having perfectly satisfied his curiosity by a perusal of the strange figure and features of the vision that was thus unexpectedly conjured up before him. "Do you know that youth?"

"Is it Awney Farrel you mane? To be sure I do. He's a kind o' sarvint and commerade o' mine." And peering on the preacher through his beetling eyebrows with that air of low cunning which becomes the countenance of a fool as gracefully as rouge would the cheek of a corpse, he sauntered

in a shambling, awkward gait toward the chimney corner, where he took his seat on the hob, spread his great skeleton hands before the blaze, and clattered them together occasionally, in the vain effort to bring back the blood into their rigid and obstructed channels.

Presently, the preacher being still occupied in a wondering perusal of the person and action of the stranger, he drew from the breast of his gray frieze coat a small piece of a yellow shining metal, which the active mind of the former, assisted by many wavering recollections of the regal evidences frequently discovered in the wildest bogs and quarries of the country of its former wealth and splendour, instantly stamped with the authority of gold. He was not induced to change his opinion by what followed.

"I'm a poor man," said the stranger, "and in want o' mains to carry me to my own people, down near Dublin; an' I'm told I have more than the worth o' my expenses in this. I think it's nothing but brass, but more tells me it's raal gold. May be you'd look at it, sir?"

Shine examined the metal, and satisfied himself to his great astonishment, that it was indeed an ingot of pure gold.

"It's brass, isn't it, sir?" repeated the stranger, who had been anxiously glancing from the ingot to the preacher's eyes, while the latter was estimating the value of the metal.

"What is your name, friend?" asked Shine, eluding the query.

"My name?" echoed the man distrustfully—"Oh, what has that to say to the ingot?"

"Why are you unwilling to tell me?"

"If I thought," said the stranger, pausing for some time in a mood of stolid deliberation—"that I'd be safe to tell you—and indeed by the looks o' you, I think I would."

"You may depend upon me," said his companion.

"May I? Oh, well sure that's enough to satisfy anybody. My name is Mac O'Neil. An' if I thought it safe—but sure

you say it is—I'd tell you where a great deal more o' the same kind might be had."

The person accosted felt, at the same time, a deep emotion of pity for the simplicity of the owner of the treasure—and a strong temptation to render him an object of still greater compassion, by making his own use of the intelligence he should convey. He encouraged him therefore to proceed, and Maney Mac O'Neil, after sundry misgivings, ventured to make the confidence he asked.

"There's some years since I was a 'prentice wid a mason by trade—and one time at Easter, when my master left myself an anoder 'prentice, to make a pair o' piers for a gate there, just hard by the ould buildings, an went somewhere else wid himself—I was sarchen among the ould ruins, to see would I get some good stones for the peers, when I seen one place just about the big of a door, an it filled up with the sort o' stones I wanted—so to work I went, striven to get 'em out, an taken 'em along 'id me to my commerade; but before I got passen the half o' them out, what should I see only steps in before me, an they goen down like stairs! Well an' good, af I did, I went in to see what sort of a place was it that was there, an where should the steps be after carrying me to, but into the middle of a dark room (I b'lieve it's a wault you call it, where the gentlemen puts their friends when they die)—and what should I find there, but a great parcel of chests, or coffins, as I thought they were at first, which they wor not, being made of iron, as I found out when I struck my crow again 'em. Well, when I found that, I went out an stopt up the hole again, 'for fear any one would find it out upon me,' says I to myself, 'until I come to-night, and know more about it.' Well an good—when it was dark, I came back myself, an' my commerade along id me, and we went in to the same place wid a candle and a dark lantern, an' we broke the chests wid the crowbar, and what should we find in them (that's in one of 'em), but little bars like this I showed you, piled a top

o' one another, a yard high—an' I declare it I think it's goold, eh? though I wouldn't give into it before strangers There was another o' the chests full o' candlesticks—and more of 'em wid crosses, an' cups, an' rings, an' fine shinen stones—so we took 'em all out o' that, an' buried 'em in another place, in dread the landlord, if he come to hear of it, would come down on us wid the Royalty o' the place, an' take every whole tote to himself. So you won't tell anybody—only af you had a friend that would give us a little monies we'd give him a bargain—for I'm afeerd to speak to the goldsmits in Dublin or anywhere, in dread he'd challenge us openly wid 'em, and may be all we'd get for 'em is nothing, an' to go to jail besides."

"Are you willing then to part with this bar which I hold in my hand?" said Shine after some hesitation, during which he began to jingle a few old pistoles (a coin then current among others in the country) in the flapped pocket of his waistcoat—the remnant of his dividend from a late field collection.

O, af I got anything for it that would be worth mentioning—or as much as would carry me to—"

The speaker interrupted himself in the midst of the sentence, to gaze with dilated and wondering eyes on the expanded hand of Shine, which exposed three shining pieces —at the same time that the ingot was elevated in the other in a manner which seemed to propose a choice between both, to him who owned the latter. The other, fool as he was, understood the action, but appeared to dislike the bargain, for he snatched his ingot, and thrust it into his breast—shutting his eyes—and waving his head in token of refusal. Shine placed another piece in his hand—Maney again produced an ingot, and tossed it to the preacher, while he gathered with his long, knobbed fingers, the four pieces from the fat hand in which they were placed.

"It's brass, though, mind. It would rune me av you said otherwise—an' sure 'twouldn't be the case neither."

Shine laughed, although a slight qualm troubled his conscience when he considered the great difference between the value of the article and the price which the fool had consented to take for it.

"I'll see you another time, an' I'll tell you all about the ould Abbey and uvery thing," said Maney, as he turned to depart.

"You say you have more of these, friend Maney?" said Shine. The fool nodded an assent. "You'll find me liberal," concluded the preacher.

Shine did not at all like the expression of Maney's eyes when he said this. There was an ugly light about them which made the preacher's heart sink within him. Before he had time to digest the half-awakened inquietude however, the back-door again opened, and Spellacy entered alone.

He took off his hat and bowed to the Doctor—spoke to Maney as to one well known to him—and bade him go relieve Switzer from the care of the horses—adding something in a whisper which did not reach the preacher's ears. Maney departed, laying his finger on his lips in token of secrecy, as he looked at the preacher. Spellacy went into the inner room, and Shine remained in the chimney-corner, his heart fluctuating between compunction for the knavery he had been guilty of, gratification at his gain, and alarm at the recollection of Maney's parting glance; though an indifferent person could see no further inference to be deduced from it than a testimony of the great feebleness of conscious wrong, which it was in the power of natural stupidity to abash so easily.

CHAPTER VI.

It has a strange, quick jar upon the ear,
That cocking of a pistol, when you know
A moment's space may bring its mouth to bear
Upon your person—two yards off—or so.

Byron.

The evening hung heavily on Kumba's hands. Notwithstanding the repeated disappointments which he had met with in the schemes devised by Spellacy, the alternative which he proposed to himself in case of rejecting this final one, was so little in accordance with his inclinations that he had almost determined on acceding to the latter, long before the hour of appointment came, and before he was even acquainted with its nature. He hurried over his solitary evening meal, but when that was dispatched, he found that it in no wise accelerated the hour of meeting, which was yet distant. He read over the letter of his mistress's parent, which stipulated a term of probation that his impatient temper could never have endured—flung it aside—took down his violin—and accompanied it with some words which seemed melancholy enough to suit his own fortunes:—

I.

The sally-coop where once I strayed
Is faded now and lonely—
The echoes in the leafless glade
Wake to the waters only—
My early haunts are perished all,
My early friends departed—
And I sit in my native hall
Forlorn and broken-hearted.

II.

When last I lay beside that stream
I dreamt of fame and splendour,
And bliss was mingled with my dream,
Domestic, sweet, and tender—
Now I would give that fame and all,
Were this soft starlight gleaming
On my old friends in their old hall,
And I an infant dreaming.

The hour of appointment at length drew nigh, and he repaired to the Rath indicated by his companion, which was made remarkable by one of those table stones, or cromleachs —enormous tabular masses of rock supported on five or six pedestals of the same material, great numbers of which are to be met with in various parts of Ireland, of Great Britain, and even on the continent, and which are supposed by some antiquaries to have served the purpose of altars in the celebration of the mystic rites of Odin, while the vulgar traditions of the country represent them as the rural dining-tables of the ancient gigantic colonists of the island.

He had not arrived many minutes before he was joined by Spellacy, who appeared to labour under some perplexity of mind as to the course which he should pursue.

"Mr. Kumba," he at length said, after much hesitation, "to be plain with you, if you should not choose to come into my plan, it will put my life in your power, and that puzzles me a little."

Kumba stared on him in some surprise. "I am totally unable to conceive your meaning," said he, "but on that head, you may be assured that I am not base enough to avail myself of any information by which you may commit yourself."

"It is enough, sir," said Spellacy. "Follow me, if you please."

They proceeded down the hillock, over a little rocky rivulet, into a small dark copse of stunted elms and hazels, through which an almost imperceptible pathway overgrown with brambles, prishoc-weed, and underwood, conducted them to the door of a small thatched building, having the appearance of a stable, and connected with a ruined smithy. Spellacy hastily pulled the string of the latch, and admitted his friend into a stable, which was occupied by four stout rough-coated horses, whose furniture hung against an uncast wall of mud and stone on the opposite side. The condition of the animals, and the comfortable air of the place

in which they were accommodated, might, at a moment of lesser interest, have excited the surprise of Kumba, but he was now too completely overwhelmed even to exercise a distinct judgment on the very circumstance which absorbed all his attention. A small ladder leading through a narrow opening in the boarded ceiling to a loft overhead, was next disclosed by his companion, who now relinquished his hold and motioned Kumba to ascend.

"Stay! cried the latter, at length, "whither are we going?"

"Hush! no words here—at laste, talk smaller than that, if you value our lives. Up, and ask no questions!"

"But——"

"Hush! up, I say again!" Kumba yielded, and they ascended."

"Now, Mr. Robert!" said Spellacy, in a low tone, "only act like a man for one half hour, and you're made. Do you know where you are?"

Kumba stared wildly around him. They stood in a space about four feet square, the rest of the loft being to all appearance blocked up with hay and straw, except on one side near the wall, where a fissure in the mass had been formed, apparently by the gradual use made of the article for consumption in the lower apartment. To this narrow opening, Spellacy beckoned his friend, and seizing his hand, as he hung back in wondering hesitation, drew him into a long passage, dark, and becoming somewhat wider as they advanced. The first intimation the young farmer received of the nature of the place to which he was about to be introduced, was conveyed in a sound resembling the clink of small hammers faintly heard, and an occasional murmur of human voices, alternated by the creaking of some great machine, the working of which caused a degree of tremulous insecurity in the floor beneath them. All, however, was hushed into a perfect stillness, the moment Spellacy applied his fingers to the latch of a small door, which yielded to the effort, and disclosed the interior of the apartment.

"*Chaishin a moch ?*"* was grumbled by a hoarse voice from within.

"*Suil Lhuv !*"† exclaimed the companion of Kumba.

"*Gudhain ella ?*"‡ asked the same voice.

Spellacy made no answer, but motioned Kumba with his hand to remain in the darkness, where he was, and passed into the room. This, with its inmates, was fully visible to the latter, whose already excited brain was filled with a thousand new visions of terror, as his eye wandered over the details of a scene, with which were associated even the horrors of his infant life, when the name of the blood-stained gang, on the threshold of whose lair he now stood, was used to quell the peevish querulousness of his childish heart—and made him cling with murmurs of dependent anxiety to the bosom of his fosterer.

A large fire, formed with a mixture of culm and heavy turf, supplied the principal portion of the light by which the inmates of the place were enabled to carry on their secret toil. Near the centre of the room, the farther end of which was almost completely enveloped in the evolutions of a black and sulphurous smoke, was an engine at work, the whitish and wavering light of the furnace revealing, in fitful alternations of brilliancy and gloom, the aged countenance of the artificer, a white-haired man, whose large glistening eyes, and hoary, straight locks presented a ghastly contrast to his smutted and wasted features. The effect of this figure on Kumba's heart was such as might be occasioned by a sudden indication of life on the features of a mummy. Around this person a number of figures were constantly flitting through the uncertain light, some young, some advanced in years—the countenances of all marked with a degree of sternness which could not but be considered as the result of a habitual ferocity of temper, and which was rendered doubly forcible and repugnant in its

* Who is there? † The dark-eyed.

‡ Is there any one else?

effect by the murk and dusky hue which the features had acquired from the thickened atmosphere around them.—Kumba shrank back involuntarily whenever any of their eyes happened to glance in his direction, although a moment's consideration might have satisfied him that he was perfectly sheltered from observation by the darkness in which he stood. The men were, for the most part, uncoated, the sleeves of their coarse and blackened *bandle-linen* shirts being tucked up, after the fashion of blacksmiths, about their shoulders—their harsh, brown chests half exposed, and their hands employed with various tools, of the immediate use of which the unseen spectator was ignorant. Notwithstanding the anxiety, even approaching to terror, which made the heart of the latter knock fiercely against his ribs as he gazed upon the scene, and although he deemed an introduction to this fearful circle of desperadoes as little less than a death-warrant, he could not resist the emotions of that violent and unaccountable curiosity which compels a man so strongly to neglect all other considerations when weighed against the opportunity of its gratification, and which seems to increase precisely in proportion to the extent of the danger which it involves. Hearing Spellacy engaged in conversation with a number of persons at a little distance inside, and anxious, he thought not wherefore, to learn the purport of their conversation, he began to meditate a nearer approach. A heap of turf, gradually ascending to the very roof, and extending several feet into the room, appeared to afford the best means he could desire of accomplishing this purpose. He crept cautiously up, trembling in all his limbs, as the action of his person seemed to menace the unstable pile of peat sods with a general downfal. In a few seconds he lay lengthwise, within a foot of the thatched roof, while the knot of confabulators was visible immediately beneath his eye. His friend Spellacy, whom he now surveyed with a new and fearful interest, since he became invested, by his own avowal, with all

the terrible associations connected with the name of Suil Dhuv, the Coiner, was standing in the centre of the group, one of whom was in the act of concluding a detail, which appeared to excite a feeling of displeasure and perplexity in the mind of their leader.

"And that's the way of it, just," the fellow continued, throwing up his hands in a hopeless way, "all at a stand for the wash to give 'em a colour. I rise out of it for a business entirely. I'll take a spade, like Jerry O'Gilvy, and work a *drass*, av I don't want to be starved, all out."

"Whist! you innocent!" said a fair-faced youth who stood near, and saw the black eyes of their leader kindle on the speaker.

"Och 'iss—av I could wash over a guinea be tellen a fable or an ould story, I needn't go past *you*, I know."

"Where's Maney O'Neil's ingot?" asked Spellacy.

"O! what's that Suil Dhuv is talken of?" exclaimed a strange voice from a far corner. "Let Maney and his 'git alone, do ye. What could ye make of it in a wash, in comparison of what I make of it the way ye know ye'rselves? 'Tis Awney Farrel put that in ye'r heads, but he had best change his tone, the Dublin clea'-boy* that he is, av he has a mind to stay in my sarvice."

"Was Awney out to-day?" asked the old man near the engine.

"He was; and I heard a party coming to the door as I left the house, with Awney by their side," said Spellacy.

"Well, that's somethen any way. What road do they take? and how many of us is to be on their track? And how much o' the money do they look to have? Eh? That Awney is a smart lad. With his scrap o' Latin and his off-hand free an aisy way, he'd desave the airth."

"I'll arrange all those particulars, when I return to the inn," said Spellacy.

*Cleave or basket-boy—in the service of the victuallers.

"Do then—and do somethen for uz at last—as you get uz to do uvury thing for you. What gain had we by blowing out the brains of the ould dark Segur, only pleasing you, bekays his relation in Garmany kicked ——"

The sound of a heavy blow and a deep groan cut short this speech, to which Kumba was lending a terrified attention.

"Now, ruffian!" exclaimed Spellacy, "have *you* gained nothing? I have the use of my old hand yet, eh? Take him to the far end o' the room, one o' ye!"

The stunned and speechless wretch was instantly conveyed from the circle, and a deep silence followed. Kumba listened with renewed anxiety, although the quickness and boldness of this assertion of his authority by Spellacy conveyed an immediate sense of security to himself, which was only qualified by his awakened doubts as to the real character and intentions of the man.

"There's no occasion for ye to be looking at one another that way," said Spellacy, determinedly. "As I served him, so I'll serve every one of ye that dares to question the command you yourselves gave me, while there's a drop o' blood in this arm,"—and he extended one, the rigid muscles of which worked like small cables, as he slowly clenched his fist while he spoke. "Ye'll mind my orders—and 'twill be better for ye. Isn't that calf done bleating yet?"

"He axes your pardon for forgetten himself?" said the fair-faced lad, in a soft and conciliating tone. The wounded man dissented, with a noise similar to that short thick bark which a mastiff gives in its sleep.

"I never make words with Suil Dhuv," said the old white-haired man near the engine, rising from his place, his limbs all shaking with the palsied impotence of age—and a horrible hyena convulsion, too frightful for laughter, mingling its hoarse and sudden peals with a fit of heavy coughing and wheezing, which seemed as though it would shatter him momentarily to pieces—"I never quarril wit him for

clinchen a bizniz well—'tis—O—hugh—hugh!—this chest o' mine!—'tis the safest and the surest course by half. That was our word—hugh—hugh—among the Rapparees of ould times—in my young—O this back o' mine!—hugh—hugh!—young days—when they used to be laughen at strong John Macpharson* for never passen a good squeeze—and he coom to the gallows be that same, too. I seen—hugh—hugh!—I seen him myself playen up Macpharson's tune, and he goen to the tree. Ah, ha, John, thought I wit meself (butt I said nothen)—av you tuk the advice o' Redmond's lads, you'd be sporten on the highway still, instead o' bein' playen at your own funeral—hugh—hugh! O Misthur darken Suil Dhuv! gi' me somethen for this cough o' mine! Nothen—nothen—we used all to say to Shawn, like a taste o' blood for salen a matter up. I'm sixty-eight years now in the world, an' I never seen a dead man mount a witness table yit. Ah! never trust one of 'em, Suil darlen, an 'you'll laugh at the law all your days—an' the comfort ov it too, whin you're used to it—and—" here a fit of coughing seized the speaker, so violent and suffocating, that Kumba, whose whole attention had been fascinated and concentrated by this display of perfect depravity, imagined that the ruffian had consummated his impieties in the patient ear of Heaven, and was about to be summoned to an instant and awful judgment.

"This culm-smoke that's killen' me intirely," the fellow continued, taking his seat at the bottom of the very heap of turf, on which Kumba lay, and causing it to shake under him. "No! Suil Dhuv—folly my ways. As long as ever I live, I'll kill. Kill first, and rob after, is my word—and I'll stick to it—aye—always—O my poor back, intirely!"

"Poor deceived wretch!" thought Kumba, an emotion of great pity mingling itself with all his horror. "Does this hoary vilkain, with the red guilt of a life of blood upon

* A notorious Irish robber.

his soul—the arm of an angry God made bare above his head,—this miserable creature, the strings of whose life appear to be all let down—with a frame whose least motion is almost sufficient to shake its structure to pieces—who sits there shaking and laughing and ready to fall bone after bone, already mouldering, into the grave—does this idiot demon plan future scenes of murder for himself? Poor deceived, unhappy wretch! This is horrible." And in an emotion of deep feeling, such as people of an enthusiastic temper and susceptible mind are liable to experience at witnessing any extraordinary novelty, either in the moral or physical world, he clasped his hands together, and felt his eyes fill, and his whole frame tremble with a wholesome and softening agitation.

Immediately, and by one of those startling bounds which Reason makes, when accidently freed from the restraint that was imposed upon her by passion and convenience, she springs into her own free dominion, and mounts

——"with prosperous wing full summed,"

to her real station in the soul—ascending, not by the slow steps of inference and deduction, but piercing with one glance the mists which worldly interest have gathered around the naked brightness of truth—dashing aside at a single effort the cobweb snares of her false sister sophistry, and trampling and hurling downward in her flight the loose and crumbling obstacles, among which she has been long imprisoned by selfish motive and human respect—in an instant—and by a transition as rapid—a perfect and illuminating change was worked in the soul of Kumba. While he gazed on the old man, the fearful and terrifying suggestion darted through the brain, that *his* was the close of a career commencing like his own. His heart froze within his bosom—and then burned—and grew cold again, while a sudden damp stood on his brow and limbs, and his eyes became riveted and fixed in spite of himself on the hoary and pal-

sied murderer—whom he began now to look on as a future self of himself—the double-goer of his age!—a spectre conjured back from the days to come, for the purpose of startling him, like another Hazael, with a reflection of his future soul. He clasped his hands once more fearfully—and lost, in the intensity of his agitation, a part of the conversation which ensued. The first sound from beneath that again fixed his attention, was the mention of his own name pronounced in a heated and passionate tone by Spellacy. The old man was replying, when Kumba's attention was aroused—

"O don't mind that, Suil Dhuv, 'tis like the dhrams o' whiskey. Let him get the taste of it wanst, an' see av he won't long fur it again. 'Twas the same way wit mese'f jest. The first blood I uver tuk was that of a 'ittle mousceen that bit me finger in a mail-tub. Ah ha, fait my lad, siz I, an' I not four year ould the same time, I'll ha' my rivinge o' you any way; an' I caught him be the tail an' I hung him over the blaze of a slip of bog-dale—and he screechen an' I laughen' an' grinden' my teeth as it might be this way—till he died, burnt in the blaze—and my father laughen' an' houlden me mother, that was for runnen' and tairen' the 'ittle cratur from betune me fingirs." Here a renewed convulsion of coughing and laughter seized the wretch—"Then I used to slit the throats o' the chickens to save the maids the throuble—this way wit the scissor—and afther, I'd get one o' the pigs to give 'um a knock o' the hatchet whin the butcher would come to the house at Aisther or Christmas—an' sometimes, may be I'd *haugh** the stout cow fur him when she wouldn't stand steady—I wish *I* could stand steady, now I know—O millia murther! and 'tis *I* that ought to say *that!* How the butcher an' all of 'em laughed the fusht time when I tuk the sharp edge, instid o' the broad back o' the hatchit— ha! ha! 'Twas that first

* Divide it with a knive the *tendon Achilles.*

made 'em put the name o' Red Rody upon me—though it's White Rody wit me now, any way," he concluded, raising his long silver hair with a smile which had so much of melancholy in it, as to astonish Kumba with the conviction that the hard and ungentle nature even of such a being as this, was not incapable of retaining amid the petrifaction of all its benevolent susceptibilities—a selfish softness and tenderness of feeling in its own regard.

"Paugh! What has all this to do wit the robben' o' Lilly Byrne and her——"

"Hush-sh-sh!" Spellacy hastily interrupted the speaker.

"For what? Eh? Who's there? Are we betrayed. Ay—do! strike me agin an' agin after that, if you have a mind, but I'll do my duty—Have you any body lissnen' to us?"

The name of his mistress, pronounced in such ruffian fashion, occasioned such an agitation of rage and horror in Kumba's soul, that it was with difficulty he restrained himself from rushing into the midst of the group and hazarding everything for an instant elucidation of the designs which were under debate. Chance did for him what prudence, however, forbade his attempting. The old man, Rody, quickly rising from his seat at the base of the turfen heap, disturbed materially the already frail structure that sustained the listener. A few sods fell—in the effort to prevent a further peril, Kumba shook the whole fabric and came tumbling headlong, amid the clatter of the falling fuel and the savage yells of the outrageous gang, who started back from the circle with exclamations of rage and terror.

"*Therom a-shkien! Mauriga Spy!*"* shouted one, in a rapture of vengeance.

"*Rosth erdhai fier dhen thinna.*"† cried another, springing on the youth will a yell of ferocious anger.

"*Fauscai*—hugh! hugh!—*fauscai moch a nikin leshai*

* Give me the knife—Kill the Spy!
† Roast him behind the fire?

press !"* wheezed out Red Rody—all clamouring together in their venacular idiom, in their sudden excitement of the moment.

"*Connidh-a-lauv ! Esaun-dha sucur a bherom lath !*"† Spellacy suddenly shouted out, in accents that made the floor shake beneath them, while he placed himself in an attitude of determined resistance between the gang and his prostrate friend, over whom Red Rody had uplifted a short bar of iron, with a degree of strength which nothing less stimulating than the prospect of an immediate gratification of his ruling passion could have struck into his palsied arm.

There was a pause—while the eyes of all were directed on their leader.

"Fools, dolts !" he at length exclaimed, his round black eyes sparkling with a light which might have readily accounted to a stranger for the cognomen which had been conferred upon him—"a brass pin would make me lave him to ye, to let ye see what ye'd get by ye'r mane suspicion of one that's a better friend than ye'rselves to ye ! An' you, you graat baste, that nothing 'll ever tache"—addressing the wounded man—"it's the dint o' the bare compassion that prevents me maken' a mash o' your head upon the floor. Get up, Mr. Kumba, an' tell 'em who you are."

Kumba arose and gazed around him. The men slowly relaxed their attitudes of rigid passion, and old Rody, lowering his weapon, tottered with many discontented mutterings toward his ancient place, near the stamping press.

"We meant no harm," said the wounded man; "but there's little admiration we shouldn't know a friend that coom that way, so droll, tumbling down ov a hape o' turf into the middle of us, all at wanst, out."

"May be," said Jerry, with a very soft sneer, "that's

* Squeeze out his brains with the press.
† Hold your hand! Stop, I tell you!

the way of intherduchins among the gintlemin, that we knows nothen about?"

It was some moments before the young man fully recollected himself. When he did so, all the consequences and difficulties of his situation came rushing swiftly upon his mind; and as he had already, in one rapid glance at the approaching possibilities, determined upon his course, the peril which they involved made his heart beat and tremble within him. He felt himself, nevertheless, amid all the gathering anxiety that began to creep within his bosom, more at liberty to debate and decide them, while he was yet in comparative safety—for there are doubtless many natures, while yet unformed and undecided, in which the elements of vigour and energy are loosely scattered, and which require the impulse of extremity itself to call them into confident action; as a vane, that flaps from point to point of the compass, while it is visited by feeble currents of air, will firmly fix and settle when the black tempest is poured about it.

While Kumba thus remained, gazing upon the circle—and charged (to use a chemical metaphor) with an intense and uncompromising purpose—his frame covered with the dew of anxiety, and trembling for itself, while the mind maintained that fearful and clear-sighted serenity which governed the tottering steps of the martyrs of the early faith, or that feeling which, to use a more familiar though less noble illustration, throws a degree of grace and dignity into the movements of the hopeless wretch who journeys to his fate at the summons of the injured spirit of justice—while he remained buoyed up, amid a tumult of agitating reflections, by this sudden firmness of resolution, the men with whom he was preparing his heart to endure a keen encounter of moral or physical strength, as the case might be (the latter evidently hopeless), recommenced their deliberation of the mysterious design of which Kumba had already received so terrifying a glimpse.

"'Tis almost time for us to be starten, I'm thinken," said

Jerry, withdrawing a heavy cloth, and exposing a small pane, through which the dark red, level light of a sullen evening sun darted across the room, forming a singular contrast to the whitish, ghastly lustre of the furnace, as it struck in succession on the outlines of stern and smutted features, and fragments of scattered tools, tinging the white and eddying volumes of vapour with deep crimson, and losing itself in the dense gloom long before it could have struck the further wall of the apartment.

Spellacy glanced at Kumba before he replied. The look with which he was encountered by the latter, as fixed and resolute as his own, did not appear to please him.

"Mr. Kumba has no means o' goen," said he doubtingly.

"An there four able bastes under uz, an only three of uz goen wit him?"

"I forgot that. Go and saddle them, Jerry. Did you bring your arms, Mr. Kumba?"

"Just Providence! no——" the young man exclaimed, suddenly thrusting one hand into his bosom, and clasping his brow with the other, while a pang of disappointment shot into his heart. The real cause of his regret was fortunately not understood by the hearers.

"Pho! don't mind that. I'll lend you a pair of the best feather-springs that ever said 'pop!' for touch 'em. Put these in your houlsther." Kumba eagerly reached at the weapons, but almost gasped his renewed disappointment, when the wounded man who had been narrowly watching his eyes, put the pistols down with his hand and waved Kumba back.

"Easy!" he exclaimed; "fair an' easy goes far in a day. We'll know your maning first, a' you please."

"Hold!" said Kumba, manning himself by a strong effort—"We must all clearly understand each other. What are your designs, and what do you expect fro n me? Speak, for I *must* know them!" The firmness with which he

spoke the last sentence, commanded for the first time an involuntary sentiment of respect among the ruffians, over whom the spectacle of aroused-up virtue had not ceased to exercise an influence akin to that which, as we are taught, the demons feel in the contemplation of divinity.

"Let me explain all to Mr. Kumba," said Spellacy, moving towards him, and about to lay his hand on the arm of the latter, who shrunk back as if he thought the touch would have blistered him.

"No *colloguen !*"* said a voice from behind.

Spellacy darted a rapid glance in the direction of the voice, but no lips moved there.

"No cott'nen' in corners !" said another.

Again the black eyes of the Coiner endeavoured to penetrate the darkness, but with no greater success. His blood seethed in its channels.

"Let nvery thing be abo' boord !" muttered a third voice. Suil Dhuv, who at once felt the danger of any compromise of dignity, made no further effort to discover the disaffected, but assuming a perfect indifference of manner, proceeded towards Kumba.

"Let it be as he says," said the latter, whose spirit fainted as the anxiety of a hope stole upon it. "Come Spellacy, come to your own house and we'll speak of it there, and depend upon it, if the plan appears reasonable to me, I'll not be backward in————" He stopped the sentence and compressed his lips, as in turning his head aside he beheld Red Rody slipping the door-bolt into its place, and regarding him with a horrible side-long leer.

"A' then—hugh !—a' then wasn't it the little chicken he was?—'Coom to ye'r own house, Spellacy,' siz he—O thin the knowen' boy he was!—hugh—hugh ! '*If* your plans be raiz'nubble'—Gondountha wisha !—

* Secret whispering.

'*If ifs* an *ans*
Wor kittles an pans
Ther'd be small use for the tinkers—

Shasthone *if!* You had your liberty wit the *ifs* before you coom here, masther, you'll have to dale wit the *musts* now, I'm thinken"

Kumba's heart once more sunk within him, but his despair was perfectly accomplished when he beheld Spellacy endeavouring to repress a smile at the incident. The hollowness of the ruffian's friendship at once rushed upon his understanding, and showed him that he stood in this peril, solitary and unfriended, and even unfelt for.

"Coom, coom!" exclaimed the wounded man—"let the jintleman know what's wanten'. Sur, av you plase, we're in want o' money, an' we're goen to look fur it at Drumscanlon. Bekays you know the ways o' the place, in regard o' being coorten' the young lady there, of ou'd—we want you to try it wit us, and take Miss Lilly Byrne (an a lily she is—an' a darlen lily, all over, sure)—fur your share o' the plunder."

The gradually increasing passion which nerved and expanded the figure of Kumba as he listened to this speech, and at length boiled within his heart, now burst forth with a degree of violence which made even the ruffian start and change colour. "Villain!" the young man broke out—but the torrent was checked in the very bound. The instinct of nature and habit suggested his course almost involuntarily to the man. He levelled a pistol at the head of the youth, and looked coldly and wonderingly in his eye. The latter remained in the attitude of the interrupted passion, gaping on his opponent, his limbs shaking audibly beneath him, his arms still extended, and his fists clenched, until a sudden change came over his person. The hot anger that filled him exuded in a cold and chilling sweat—a sickening sensation crept through his breast—a hard throbbing struck painfully through his brain—and mists floated before his eyes, through

which the form of t' e coiner, who still kept the weapon steadily presented, seemed by degrees to acquire a Satanic grandeur and indistinctness of outline. The youth relaxed his closed hands, and endeavoured, while he still stared like one spell-bound into the bore of the pistol, to catch at some support.

"Let us lose no time," said the man, making Kumba start, with a sudden gasp of fear, at the first sound of his voice. "Coom, sir! Are you for us, or aga'nst us?"

"Spellacy!.....Spellacy!".....muttered Kumba, in a low and listless tone. But Suil Dhuv did not answer him.

"Wance for all, I say, will you be wit uz?"

"I am alone! I am unarmed! I am betrayed!" Kumba again murmured, in a tone so expressive of utter agony, that it touched the heart of Jerry.

"Murther, murther in Irish! O the poor lad!" he exclaimed, "let him think a little."

Again the query was repeated, and again Kumba neglected to answer. The man vented an oath, and cocked the weapon. "Is it game you're maken?" he asked fiercely.

"No.....n—n...no! I do not insult you.....I .....no.....Spellacy, hurry.....hurry!.....stay! .....One moment!....Ah! Spellacy, is it all come to this?"

"Spellacy can't help you, sir, !" said Suil Dhuv, "but you can help yourself."

"Choose betune a 'Yes' and a 'No,' for that's all the arguing we'll hear from you."

A long silence ensued, while Kumba made an effort to take the election. He endeavoured to suit his frame, and stand more erect—a short, panting terror—a swift glance at his past life—a sudden and gloomy fear—a doubtful prayer—and an instant and cheering resolution to make a last compensation by dying for the right—all glanced in

rapid succession through his mind. When the question was repeated he set his teeth hard—and said through them, hoarsely but firmly, "Never!"

At the same instant a tall, ungainly, straggling figure darted between both, struck up the pistol—and fled into the darkness near the door. Kumba heard it open and shut.

"Why then, bad 'cess to you, Maney," exclaimed the coiner—"wait till——" Before the sentence was finished Kumba seeing his advantage, sprung upon the speaker, levelled him upon the earth with a despairing blow, and planting one foot upon his breast, wrenched the pistol from the unconscious fingers of his victim. He was in a posture of vigorous and vigilant resistance before one of his enemies had recovered from their astonishment. Setting one shoulder against the press, and bending his frame so as to concentrate all its strength and elasticity, he remained glancing from face to face, and watching the motions of all with that exquisite instinct of vigilance to which extremity awakens the senses. A vigorous struggle ensued. The coiners began to hem him closely round—and a few missiles—sods of turf—pieces of loose iron, or timber, were flung at him from the darkness. The more dangerous missiles, however, fortunately, were not numerous—the peat-sod he scarcely felt, and the few blows he received from the heavier weapons, were not immediately or deeply injurious; and as none of the gang appeared inclined to tempt the first fire of his single weapon, he began almost to entertain hopes of being able to capitulate, when he heard somebody scrambling on the press over him, and saw Suil Dhuv's eyes glisten with approbation as he looked in that direction. In an instant he received a blow on the crown of the head, which made the room appear all wrapt in one red flame, and then as instantly enveloped in total gloom. His skull felt as if it were about to dissolve upon his shoulders. His arms dropped—his heart swung and fluttered in his bosom, and all was—darkness.

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the white-haired ruffian, as he endeavoured to descend from his hold—"I thought I hadn't lost the knack of it, yit. Quiet an aizy, he is now, isn't he, why! He'll tell nobody now, only two sorts of people—thim that axes him, and thim that doesn't. Gi' me a hand, Jerry—O this cough of mine!—hugh!—hugh! A cough—a coffin they say, Wipe the blood from his forehid, do ye, boys—and go about ye'r bizniz, file I stay an' watch my lad!"

CHAPTER VII.

I am not now the blooming maid
That used to love the valley's shade;
My youth and hopes are quite decayed,
And all my joys are gone!
Irish Ballad.

That which hath made them drunk, hath made *me* bold—
What hath quenched them, hath given *me* fire.
Shakspeare.

Rejoiced, at length, to breathe a purer atmosphere than that which has been suffocating us through the last chapter, we request the reader to return, for the last time, with us to the sleeper and his blue-eyed sentinel, in the parlour of the inn. The interest which she had evinced for the old man, and which had excited so much astonishment in his mind, did not appear to subside after she had accomplished the object which she desired, and beheld him once more locked in the unconsciousness of a profound repose. She remained pacing softly and anxiously through the room, sometimes pressing her brow with her expanded palm, at others clasping and wringing her hands hard, but with a perfectly noiseless action—now starting and biting her thin lip, as the voice of Maney and the preacher in the kitchen

made her dread the waking of her guest—now gazing fondly toward the old man's bed, while her large soft eyes became watery, and her wasted and yellow countenance changed and saddened under the influence of some melancholy associations, until she stretched her arms forth to their furthest limit, and her bosom heaved and panted with a longing tenderness—and then by a sudden transition, shuddering with horror, gathering her hands fearfully to her bosom, and endeavouring by an impatient gesture to shake off the startling recollection, whatever it was, that had checked the flowing kindness. At another time as she crept across the room, the valise of the Palatine caught her eye, and made her start and tremble so violently, that it seemed to require a powerful effort of self-command to prevent her renewing the wild cry of agony with which she had before startled the household. She then, with a light, tiptoe movement, crept to the bedside, seemed about to lift the dimity curtain, paused, clasped her hands, looked upward, and finally withdrew it, and gazed upon the sleeper.

"*His !*" she exclaimed, muttering, in a soft whisper a link from the chain of her silent conference with her own heart—"*his !*——O if I could only by tears, and kneeling and moistening the very dust about his feet, obtain *his* that I wronged more cruelly than by saying a word of truth in his ear ! O how softly, and kindly, and warmly his word of anger and command fell upon my heart ! I thought I was a child again, and that my own father stood before me. Where is *my* father **now** ! Ay, have you a father, you miserable dupe ?—You robber's wife ! you worse robber than the worst, you plunderer of the old man's peace ! you thief of his rest and happiness !—and for what ?—For——" here an uneasy motion of the sleeper alarmed her. She let the curtain fall, and taking her seat on a low chair near the bed, she commenced, in that low and murmuring melody of tone which Irish nurses use to lull the ear of infancy, and which scarcely exceeds in the extent of its compass or the

variety of its intonation the drowsy rise and fall of the hum of summer bees, a simple and plaintive air, the words of which, rude as they were, we will venture to transcribe.

I.

The mie-na-mallah* now is past,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
And I must leave my home at last,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
I look into my father's eyes—
I hear my mother's parting sighs—
Ah; fool to pine for other ties—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

II.

This evening they must sit alone,
O wirra sthru! O wirra-sthru!
They'll talk of me when I am gone,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Who now will cheer my weary sire,
When toil and care his heart shall tire?
My chair is empty by the fire!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

III.

How sunny looks my pleasant home!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Those flowers for me shall never bloom—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
I seek new friends, and I am told,
That they are rich in lands and gold;
Ah! will they love me like the old?
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

IV.

Farewell! dear friends, we meet no more—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
My husband's horse is at the door!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Ah, love! ah, love, be kind to me;
For by this breaking heart you see
How dearly I have purchased thee!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

Honeymoon.

As the singer paused on the last cadence of the air, the pathos and simplicity of which she rendered infinitely touching by the delicate management of a voice of great softness and tenderness of tone, a short-breathed sigh proceeding from some person near her, mingled with and checked it in the close. Raising her eyes, she beheld Suil Dhuv bending over her, his arms folded, and an expression on his features which might be indicative of mingled kindness and deliberation. Her thoughts instantly recurred to her guest, and with a movement of swift alarm she arose from her seat, and endeavoured to lead him from the place.

"Stay, Sally!" she exclaimed, "I want to know about the——" but the woman stopped his speech, putting her finger on her lip, and pointing to the bed. The Coiner followed her.

"What are they?—where are they going?—and by what road?" were the first questions which he asked, when they had passed through the kitchen, where Shine was now slumbering by the fire, and gained the apartment in the further end of the house.

"My love!—my own love!" said the woman, laying her hand on his arm, and pressing it affectionately—we have been now four years married, living together, true to one another, in sickness, in want, in joy—(and we *had* our share of *that* too, Mark)—and in guilt—(and of *that* too, Mark, hadn't we?)—and——"

"Come! come!" said Spellacy, impatiently—"what preachment are we to have now?"

"I was only saying, Mark, that we had been now so long married, and I never—never once made you a request since the first day we wedded."

"And whose fault do you want to say that was?"

"My own, darling!" she said, laying her hands caressingly on his shoulders—"sure I know 'twas my own! but it won't be my fault any longer, for I have something to ask you for now at last."

"Well, what's that to be?" the husband muttered distrustfully.

"First tell me, darling, what you intend."

"Poh! the old plan always. To make sure o' the horses and the arms you know, and then the four of us to ride off to Drumscanlon, and do our business there—and be back so as to take these here upon their way. 'Twill be a brisk night's work," he added looking into the air.

"You will not use violence?" she said falteringly, while she watched his eyes.

"Poh—no—no—no—to be sure," the fellow replied carelessly.

The negative was not satisfactory.

"Mark," said the woman, twining her arms close about his neck, and looking with an agony of entreaty in his face, "my request—my first and only one—is this—that you will spend this evening with me, and let those men depart in peace"

Suil Dhuv stared upon her.

"I charge you," she continued, raising her voice and assuming a more solemn tone, "harm them not! Lay not your finger on a hair of that old man's head, as you value your life! Do not brush the dust from his path! If you give him one evil eye—one bad wish—one ruffian thought—it were better for you, your nurse had strangled you upon her lap! Let the morning dawn see you as innocent of harm, thought or done, towards him, as the child that is unborn!"

"Why——Sally——!"

"Keep off your hand! You know me not!—I tell you, man, you know but little of me yet. Observe my words, or fear 'em!—Fear for your soul! or if that will not startle you, fear for your neck!—for as sure as that man's way is troubled—ay, if only by a pebble cast in it by your hand, you shall die the death of a dog!"

She was about to leave the room, as if conscious of her

inability to sustain the commanding and energetic tone she had assumed in her fit of enthusiasm, when Suil Dhuv, at length recovered from his astonishment, though not at all touched either by tenderness or her menaces, seized her firmly by the arm—shut the door fast,—and looking fixedly into her eyes, asked :—

"Who is this man?"

"No matter!" said the woman, avoiding his gaze and clearing the perspiration from her brow, "that is my request, grant or refuse it as you will."

The Coiner slowly relaxed his hold, while he remained gazing with an exertion of intense scrutiny on her changing and agitated features. She seemed to understand the action, though she dared not look at him, and this consciousness served only to increase her anxiety. A creeping, cold, malignant smile at length parted his hard lips, and glistened with a triumphant light in his eye. He let her hand fall, and walked in silence toward the door.

It was now *her* turn to interpose. "Hold! stay!" she exclaimed, "is my request granted? O tell me what you intend!"

"You can be secret, Sally—so can I."

"He is a friend of mine, Mark, isn't that enough?"

"Enough of what? Don't you know, there are some friends of yours that are worse than enemies to me."

The poor woman *did* know it very well, and so she told him by a mournful shake of the head

"Well! well!" she said sullenly, "I will tell you something presently. But leave me to think awhile."

"I am going to say a word to Awney Farrel—remain here until I come. So you can talk, can you?" he added in soliloquy, as he left the house. "We'll see if Lilly Byrne won't fill your place a little more softly. Not a better sport I'd wish, than to see you take up with the *mudhaun* that's lying, brained, abroad in the loft. And sure ye can do it, the two o' ye, and welcome, can't ye?"

"There is one other chance," the woman said, after meditating alone for a moment on the course which she ought now to pursue. "One chance to save all! What if it fail! Hate is as black and deadly in the old as in the young, and sometimes more so. He may refuse——What then? Avow all? Ruin! death, and horror!—Stay! let me think—let me pause a moment—O for some friend! some kind adviser—some——Heaven!" she clasped her hands and uplifted them, but again repressed the feeling. "No—no—it is my human agony that speaks, and Heaven that calls for pentience, will not hear me for my own selfish interests. My hands are bloody too—had I forgotten that?" and compressing her lips with a shocking stare of desolation, she walked to the door of the room, and beckoned the old Palatine, whose voice she heard in the next apartment, to enter.

"Do not hurt the poor child," he said, as the woman fiercely repelled the little boy, who attempted to force his way in with the old man. "I don't know why it is," he added, patting the little fellow on the head, and looking pensively in its open face, "but I like the boy. Here my man, is a tester for you!—That's a hero! I've seen an eye like that child's somewhere, certainly."

The woman fell on her knees, and clasped the child to her bosom, with a burst of hysterical passion, kissing his neck, and suffering her hair to fall in long, abandoned tresses over its back and shoulders.

"Strange creature!" thought the Palatine, "what a mixture of affection and unkindness! what a changeful suddenness of motive and feeling appear to be in all her actions!"

While he again caressed the boy, the woman rushed into the other room, dashed the tears from her eyes, and glancing quickly round, snatched, from the extended hand of Shine, a vessel of raw spirits, from which he was just about to replenish his tumbler of *punch*, and placing it to

her lips, drained it to the very last; then tossing the vessel on the table, she re-entered the apartment, fortified with that dreadful energy, with which the royal murderess of Scotland, on another occasion, sought to invigorate the natural feebleness of her sex—and utterly regardless of the impression which she left on the mind of the gaping and astounded Shine, both with respect to her morality and her good breeding.

"Your name is Segur?" she said, after pausing a moment to collect herself. "Don't start—" she added, "it was *that* informed me," pointing to the valise which he held in his hand.

"That *is* my name, certainly," said the old man in some surprise.

"You are travelling to your native village—your cottage, near Court Mattress?"

"I am."

"By the Crag road?"

"Yes."

"Return the way you came, or take any road but that, there's danger in it."

The Palatine gave her a sharp, and very suspicious glance.

"I am well armed," said he.

The woman smiled. "If no road but that will serve your purpose, remain here to-night. The heaven itself is bent against you,"—and she pointed through the window to a small black cloud that hung above the dilated disk of the parting sun.

"I am well provided in that respect also," said the old man; "but what dangers do you speak of?"

"The road is infested. Every body fears it in those times."

"O," said the Palatine, "if your counsel is only grounded on such a general suspicion, we won't say any more about it." And he turned away.

"Stay!" said the woman, detaining him, and casting her eyes on the earth. "You had———" a long pause ——"there was—"

"You are ill, my good woman."

"Sir!"

"Shall I give you a chair? Sit down. What would you say to me?"

"This ague plagues me so. One moment, sir. You had a friend, in care of your farm, an old blind man—Adam Segur? You are aware of his fate?"

"I am. He was murdered?" said the old man eagerly.

The woman shivered in all her limbs. "He was—and—"

"My daughter! I see you know my family? What of her my good woman?"

"O your daughter—your daughter is well—merry and well—I'll engage—very well and happy indeed, thanks be to Heaven."

"Thanks! humble, heartfelt thanks be to Heaven indeed!" the old man repeated with a devout emphasis, uncovering his head, and turning his moistened eyes upward. He was again painfully interrupted by a renewed passion of convulsive laughter from the woman.

"The night and the coming storm bring on my ague fit. You must not mind it. I suppose you are astonished at my acquaintance with your affairs, but I was an old neighbour, and a dear friend of your daughter's; but marriage severs fonder ties than ours. We are but poor friends now."

The old man hesitated one moment before he asked doubtingly.—"Were you at all in her confidence, then?"

"O—a little. She was taken with a young man—so she was—at the same time."

"A villain! a low ruffian!" said the Palatine, clenching his fist, and using a passionate gesture.

"Never truer word you said in your life—so much I can tell you—and more than that may be."

"My Sarah," the old man continued, in tremulous hesitation — "was always a good and dutiful child, and—"

"Don't be so sure o' that. Heaven bless your simple soul and body, I knew her better than you did a great deal —a *great* deal."

"She knew my wishes with respect to that young villain, and I'm sure she obeyed them."

"Are you, indeed? and why should you now? Had she no will of her own, do you think?" the woman said, with a rapid and angry petulance of tone, like that which sometimes precedes an access of delirium in sickness— "Was she only to be a little bit of a puppet in your hands, to pull her this way and that, and lock her up, or let her dance, just as you liked? Eh!—Sarah, do this—Sarah, do that. And Sarah was to do it all!—Ha! She was no such fool, she thanks you—"

"You do not mean—"

"Or if she did—was she to be the only saint upon earth? Others disobeyed their parents—and was she to be the only good little slave in the world—Oh, oh! Because she was *your* daughter, I suppose, she was to be as white as the snow! Pride, my dear sir—pride made the angels fall. Think more humbly of your own. I had a father as well as she—aye, a good, kind father—and I disobeyed him. I left him in his age—and destroyed his quiet—and I knew I was doing it when I did it, and I did it for all that. But don't be frightened," she added hastily, observing the paleness of a sudden alarm whitening on the brow of the old man—"*She* was less guilty than I. She was not such an abandoned, unhappy wretch as I am. Few *are*, indeed," she added, mournfully, tapping with her feet on the floor, like one in pain.

"I have been so long absent," said the Palatine—"that I have forgotten many things which perhaps some persons will say I ought to remember. You say you are an old

neighbour, yet I cannot by any exertion recall your person or your name to my recollection."

"Can you remember a family of the name of Sparling, who lived within a few perches of the high road near your village?"

"Phil Sparling? I do, very well. His wife died in giving birth to an only daughter—"

"That's it, just!" said the woman, laying her hand quickly on his arm—"I'm that daughter—that's just it, now. I am, indeed. I'm that girl."

"And your father——"

"Listen—and I'll tell you every thing. When Mark—no—no—when your daughter's sweetheart, Dinny, I think she called him, used to be coming about the cottage, Mark Spellacy here, my husband, used to be along with him, and while Sarah took *his* arm, and walked with him in the moonlight, I walked with Mark—leaving my old father that loved me, lonely in his house. Mark was poor and wanted money—and when we had agreed to go off together, unknown to the old man, I robbed him and gave it to Mark—so I did. I did, indeed. And I left my old father without so much as one—just one word for all his love, in the dead of night—and no one to care for him—without so much as a 'this' or 'that'—or 'by your leave, father'—or 'God be with you for your kindness.' Not a word indeed—no more than if he was a stone—or *I*. And I robbing him too, think o' that! Did you ever hear o' such a lady? Did you now? O my heart! My brain! Oh God, vengeful, terrible God! Oh, hell! hell! 'tis with me, sir—I have it—" And suffering her voice to fall suddenly from its shrilly and painful height to a low and hoarsely muttered sound of horror, as she repeated the last exclamation, she paused a moment, gazing with hot, dry, and distended eyeballs on the earth. The Palatine regarded her with great anxiety and commiseration.

"Poor creature!" he said, with tenderness, "so much

feeling cannot be without some beneficial influence. Why don't you return to your father?"

"*Me!* me go near him! Ah! no I am not quite so bad as that, yet. 'Tis terrible enough to think of him, and think of him I do, enough. Many a long year it is now since I left him, and yet his voice sounds as plainly in my ears as if he were constantly about me. When I wake in the morning I hear him call my name, and when we sit down to our meals, I see his old hand closed, and hear his holy, contented prayer, and think of all his fondness and his love, saying a thing from his heart, and seeming to make a joke of it. No bragging love, like a young man's. And sometimes too, in the dead of the winter night, when I lie alone in my bed, and the rain beats on the thatch, and the wind blows, and my first, frightful dreams come on, I see him then with his white, bony cheek, and his red and angry eyes, and his long gray hairs hanging down about his face, standing on the floor, and looking down towards me, upbraiding me with everything, 'Sally, look at your father, how you have served him. You have left his arms for a common robber's. Ah, Sally, when I held you in my arms, a little child, when I kissed your cheek, and taught you to know the right from the wrong, I little thought you would make me such a return as this one day!' And sometimes I see him in rags and poverty, and he bends over me with his cold blue lips, and presses his hands down upon my throat till I gasp for breath, and screech out o' my sleep, and wake in the midst o' the darkness, the black, thick darkness, all about, about me, and I wave my hands through it, and that horrible pale face is there before me still." And with a chilly shuddering, she placed both hands on her face, and sunk back in her chair.

"Yet I would advise you to lose no time in returning to your father. You will at all events have done your duty by making the effort at reconciliation, and don't think so hardly of him as to suppose he will reject you, woman. If

I judge by myself, he—no—" the old man paused, and shook his head.

"Well? well? Eh? what were you going to say?" asked the woman eagerly, "if you judged by yourself—what?"

"Nothing. I'm afraid I miscalculated."

The poor woman gave a deep sigh, and cast a disappointed look around her.

"But I have no cause to judge of others by myself. I have discovered many symptoms of hardness and inveteracy about my own character, which I am sure belong not to all men."

"No matter. Tell me how you would act yourself—for that only could give me satisfaction."

The Palatine stared hard upon her.

"Ay—speak!" she continued, "place yourself in poor Sparling's situation. Suppose your daughter had served you, as I served my father —and suppose she was as sorry for it as the Almighty, that sees my heart, knows *I* am —and suppose she was to come to your door again, and stretch her hands out to you, and cry to you for forgiveness. Would you slap the door with a curse in her face—or would you think of the dead mother that bore her and that loved you dearly—and of the God that forgave, and commanded all to forgive—and take the poor, weeping, heart-broken creature to your heart again? Would you forgive her? Would you bless her? Oh, you would, sir—your heart would soften—your eyes would fill—you would think of old times—you would feel for her—you would weep with her —you would pardon her!" And flinging herself in a convulsion of tears and agitation at the old man's feet, she remained with her hair mingled with the very dust around them.

It would be difficult to give the reader a just idea of the change which this speech occasioned in the person and features of the old Palatine. Far from appearing affected by the grief of the wretched woman, an expression, first, of

strong surprise—then of sickening terror—and lastly, of great dislike passed over them. He paused for a moment, like one who is struggling against the conviction of a dreadful truth—set his teeth—and fetched a hard breath before he raised her from the earth—then putting back her hair from her face with one hand, while he grasped her arm with the other, he looked long and amazedly into her eyes, both remaining fixed in the attitude, and affording for several minutes no further indication of life than could be discovered in an exquisitely fashioned group from the pale marble. At length, after suffering his eyes to wander over the whole person of the female, he drew a free breath, as if relieved from a dreadful apprehension and letting her arm go, he said:

"I have looked over all your person, and am satisfied that you are not my daughter—but I'm afraid I'll find it hard to forgive you the shock you caused me. Go along, you wicked woman, it was a shame for you!"

The poor woman could but sigh and weep, and cling entreatingly about him. Her perseverance appeared to increase his anger even to rage.

"Go along!" he repeated, shaking her off rudely—"Heaven forgive me! I never felt that it could be in my nature to use a woman ill since I was the height o' that—but—go along! I could almost strike you for the horrible fright you gave me! Poh! poh! I wont do it for all that," he added softly, as the woman flung her arms wide as as if to court the outrage—"but you're a shocking creature!" And he hurried out of the room, disengaging himself ungently enough, from the imploring grasp of the miserable wretch, who tottered, muttering deliriously, and casting around her glances of utter desolation of spirit, towards the chair.

"Come along, Mr Shine!" said the old man impatiently, "I could not look in that woman's face again if it were to save my life!" And he hurried in his preparation to depart.

In a few minutes, the trampling of horses' feet outside

the door announced to her the approaching departure of her guests. Looking through the window she beheld Maney O'Neil standing in his usual foolish attitude tapping his thighs with his long bony fingers, and gazing loosely about him. As soon as he caught her eyes, he winked, nodded, and elevated a coarse smith's file, at the same time tapping his foot knowingly with his finger. She beckoned him quietly toward her.

"I done it, I'll be bail, mistress," he said in a whisper. "If they go past the Crags, any way, call me an honest man, I give you free leave."

"Where's Suil Dhuv?" she asked anxiously.

"Aih? Suil Dhuv? O, he's gone—himself and the rest o' the lads."

"Gone!" she almost shrieked the word—"Impossible!"

"Aih?"

"He's not gone, he cannot be."

"O—iss, dear, he is, ma'am."

"He has deceived me!" she said, retiring in great distress of soul from the window, "his blood be on his head! Mr. Segur!" The Palatine did not answer, but seemed to quicken his departure still more.

"You need not fear, sir," she said, bitterly smiling as she opened the door and looked on him. "You have no more bad news to hear from me. You said you were armed, sir!" she added, as he sullenly entered the apartment.

"I am, thank Heaven," he said carelessly, still avoiding her eyes.

"Look to your pistols, sir!" she said. The old man now stared openly again upon her.

On flinging back the pans he started in real alarm to see both empty. He hastily dashed the ramrod into the barrels. The charges had been drawn!

"Now examine your horses' feet," the woman added. "The shoes were good enough, perhaps, but on these roads, the clenching of the sprigs is apt to wear faster than elsewhere.

The Palatine was effected even to trembling.

"You can get both these little mischiefs remedied at the other side of the hill," continued Mrs. Spellacy, "there is a forge there. And here is your ammunition," she added, handing him powder and ball from a corner cupboard. "This affair may, and most probably *will* cost me my life," she said, mournfully, "but I do not care for that. All that I entreat is that you will not fire—oh—do not! until you are compelled, I have my reasons for this request."

Segur held out his hand in silence, and wrung hers with kindness and gratitude.

"Bless you! O God, God bless you for that act!" she exclaimed, kissing the hand with a burst of the first generous heart-easing tears she had shed for many a long day. "But go—hurry—hurry—!" she added, checking herself and rising hastily. "My blessings are not ominous of much good. Ride hard and fast—the night will be lost. Farewell, sir! Since you will not stay, even to save blood."

The Palatine departed in silence.

"Now!" the woman exclaimed, after gazing with fixed and staring eyes upon the old man, until he disappeared together with his company behind the hill on the rear of the inn, "Now, Sarah, your time is come! Which of 'em is it to be? Eh, whose throat have you cut? *His* or your husband's? The father of your child—that loved—that trusted you—that tossed his life into your hands as freely as he would his money into a strong box. You have armed his worst enemy against him! Eh? you Dalilah you! what have you done? O great Heaven, was I mad? Come back? Ho, ho! old man, come back! He's gone—he pretends he can't hear me, because he hates him deadly, and he wants to take his life with the two pistols that I loaded for him. Ho! ho! ho! bravely done, wife. You're a fine lady, ain't you? Indeed you are. O my boy, my child, my first and only darling!" she continued, clasping the terrified urchin wildly to her bosom—"O my heart's

light! my treasure! Look at me! Do you know me? I'm your mother; and I sent that man, that gave you the tester, you know, I sent him to shoot your father! Wasn't I the fine mother to you? Don't curse me, you young villain, or I'll dash your brains out! He was going to take the life of my friend, and I took his, that's all. Don't tell any body, darling. O my love, my sweet love—here! put your li tle head into my heart, and comfort it, for it is breaking, and burning, and leaping within me! That's it, my dove," and gathering the pale-faced little creature with a trembling tenderness to her heart, she suffered the torrent of fierce passion to which she had abandoned herself, to die away in murmurs of mournful fondness and agitation.

Suddenly starting up, and throwing her long hair back from her ears, she remained in an attitude of intense attention. "Ha!—Was that a shot? No—not yet—sure. Stay, Dinny—stand back, sir. What am I to do, now? Hide your black eyes, child, I can't look at them. The young *suileen dhuv*. Look, the storm will soon begin now. Must I stay here all alone in the black night until one or either of them returns to me? My head would rive and burst. Stop, stop a moment! What if the storm should come on dreadfully, and the thunder, and lightning, and rain? and hinder his passage? He can't go past the Crag road, if one shower more should moisten the earth, under the Carrig-ou-Dhiol. O send it——O Heaven, forgiving Heaven, look at me." She flung herself on her knees, clasped and wrung her hands, as she looked upward in a rapture of despair—"look at me on my knees, and that's where you didn't see me for five years and more—for I dared not to do it—but look at me now, praying to you to send down all your thunders, and your lightnings, and your floods of rain, and keep them two asunder this dreadful night! Do i for your own glory, if not in pity to them or me, for so sure as they meet, there will be blood spilt in your sight!—Red blood that will lie heavy on the shedder's

soul! and leave, may be, an angel the less for your bright kingdom! Ha! is that my answer?" she exclaimed, starting from the earth, as a distant clattering of thunder sounded through the silent evening. "My heart does not tell me that my prayer is heard, as it used to do when I knelt in my father's house. My conscience is louder than the thunder, and it says, that I deserve no mercy! What am I to do? I can't stay here—to hear the clock tick, and the wind blow, while my brain is all one flame—I have it—I'll know all. Here Maney, take care o' the child!" she exclaimed, as the tall fellow presented his awkward frame at the door—and dashing fiercely past him, she hurried along the path leading to the Coiner's retreat.

In the mean time, Mr. Segur, Shine, and the trotting guide, Awney Farrel, proceeded on their way towards the forge, which Mrs. Spellacy had indicated, and where a new accident awaited them.

As they approached the building, from which the sound of clanking anvil and hammer proceeded, so as to give intimation of the premises being pre-occupied, Shine observed their guide start and use a gesture of alarm. The action instantly awakened the dormant suspicions of the preacher, who was not oblivious of the conversation on the brass coinage. Awney, however, did not suffer the emotion to remain visible in his countenance or manner longer than was absolutely necessary to establish its existence even for the moment, but carelessly turned his eyes from the door of the hovel.

It was a low, miserable-looking shed, the rafters broken, and the blackened thatch falling in in various places, so as to give free admission to the torrents of rain which were of frequent occurrence on this mountain district, and kept the little undulations of the earthern floor constantly supplied with an abundance of the fluid. As the travellers drew nearer to the place, an elderly-looking, *dressy* sort of man, equipped at all points, to *an agony* of elegance, and standing

(a coarse, ill-fashioned block of clumsy vulgarity) in the midst of a blaze of finery, looking like a black ragged cloud in a sunny sky—or a draught of muddy innkeeper's wine in a gold tankard (traveller's fare), presenting, as he crept out of the midst of a cloud of black smoke, which issued with him through the low battered door of the forge, the most apt illustration that could be desired of the hedge-school doggrel—

> "A man without learning and wearing fine clothes,
> Is like a pig with a gold ring in his nose."

such a being—leading after him a fine gelding, caparisoned in the finest style, and looking a great deal more worthy of those fine accoutrements than its master—such a being, attired in a full, snow-white wig forming a frieze, of which a shining, jet-black, soft-furred hat of the best Limerick manufacture was the capital—a smart, flowered silk waistcoat, and fine green coat, with silver-hilted sword, and tight, plush breeches, the shaft—and a pair of bright, shining, clocked silk stockings, with shoes, and gigantic silver buckles, the pedestal—such a being, so fine, so vulgar—issued, like a meteor out of a bog, from the smoke and vapour of the miniature Ætna of this Munster Vulcan.

"That is very odd what you tell me," he exclaimed, in a long County Cork drawl, "but I'm sure it isn't true for you. I don't mean to doubt your word, but you can't say you have told me the truth. I know the rogue is in this neighbourhood, and I'll find him too, you may be sure."

"Where did your honour see him?" asked the smith, suspending his sledge-hammer in the hollow of his sooty arm, while he directed his eyes to the newly-shod feet of the gelding. "Because if it be long sence, there's but a Flemish account o' the two o' them by this time."

"Hang the fellow, and his stupid eyes, they would have imposed upon a Jew, let alone a County Cork grazier. His 'gits,' as he called them! Wait till I get a vacancy

at him, I'll *'git* him, so I will. Forty pounds, sir!" he continued, turning round, in the communicativeness of passion, to Shine, who had just ridden up, and was beginning to listen with a cruel anxiety and interest to his complaints —"forty pounds the fellow cheated me of, for such trash as this!" holding out several ingots, on one of which a quantity of verdigris had collected, which, combining instantly, and by a vivid association of ideas with Maney's memorable parting leer, showed like a horrid spectre in the eyes of the preacher.

"Have you tried them, sir?" he asked in a faint and failing voice, while big drops of perspiration began to sparkle on his nose and forehead.

"Try 'em!" exclaimed the man of the white wig, "why, sir, look!" and with great agility he whipped a small bottle of aquafortis from his flapped pocket, uncorked it with his teeth, and poured a little on the metal. A sudden simmering, and then a dark steam arising, left no spell to raise the ghost of a doubt upon the quality of the ingot.

"It's not gold, I believe." said Mr. Shine, mournfully.

"Gold!" shouted he of the silver buckles, "sir, 'tis not only brass, but bad brass!"

"The same goold that's in the copper kettles," said the smith, grinning through his black lips.

"Who gave it—to—you?" asked the preacher, hesitatingly, his hand wandering fearfully about the pocket in which he had deposited his own treasure.

"Poh! poh! I'm ashamed to tell you—but it was a long stupid fellow, with a story of an old abbey, and his landlord, and his royalty, and I can't know how much trash besides—One Maney O'Neil, the greatest rogue unhanged in Munster, and that's a bold word."

Mr. Shine groaned audibly. He need not have blushed, however, at finding himself fooled by a man, who had, with the same tale, imposed upon men of rank and learning far superior to his.

"A fellow that travels about in company with a Dublin clea'-boy, named Awney Farrel," continued the complainant, "a sharp-faced young—ha!——" he paused as his eyes fell on the guide, who stood close at his elbow.

Instead of appearing at all disconcerted, Awney blinked invitingly with his eyes, tossed his head back, and beckoned the gentleman of the silver hilt to step aside with him. The latter followed in some brow-knitting suspicion and hesitation, which, however, began to dissipate and brighten up under the influence of the information, whatever it was, that the guide was conveying to him with an infinite deal of gesture and grimace. They often looked and nodded their heads towards Shine, who remained fixed in an attitude of as much horror as so fat a man could assume—his globular hands clasped before him, his lips disparted, and his eyes staring heavily on the distance. After a little time the man of the plush breeches laid his finger along the side of his nose, protruding his brow and lips, as much as to say, "I understand you;" and Awney with one farewell wink bounded over the *ditch* at the road-side and disappeared, both Shine and Segur being too much occupied with their own thoughts to observe his desertion.

While the unhappy purchaser of the single ingot remained in a state of suspense, which momently approached the verge of agony, the man of the clocked stockings beckoned to a pair of myrmidons in the forge, who presently made their appearance at the door, with red, sulky eyes, and coarse, trim-cut frieze body-coats buttoned on their stout, squat frames with horn taches, and suffering a gleam of red to appear at the breast, like the ominous streak in the dawn of a gray morn at the equinox. He of the soft-furred hat pointed towards Shine and clapped his own elbow to his sides, signifying to them what course they should adopt, adding some farther hints concerning his amazing strength and agility, which were not lost upon the hearers.

The preacher was just in the act of heaving a profound

sigh, when his arms were suddenly pinioned down, one man knocking off his hat, another throwing a small bag, or *Johny Doe*, such as the carmen feed their horses in, over his head, and drawing the running string about his neck, while a third ran with a piece of jack-line two or three swift circuits about him, as the hound does about a buffalo at bay, belaying the tether finally in the angle (the only angle that could be found in the preacher's whole person) of his elbow. This done in less time than one might take in supposing it, the man of the wig leisurely tripped up his heels, and laid the poor culprit, as they do a huge turtle, on "the broad of his back," on the road, where he remained helpless and too utterly overwhelmed with astonishment to give vent to a remonstratory groan. In fact, the whole affair was over before one thought could have displaced another in his mind.

"Now for it! the fox is bagged!" shouted the *back* (for such the grazier was allowed to be)—"Ah, ha! I thought so!" as he drew from the pocket of the prostrate, passive, vanquished hero, the ingot, the fatal ingot which was destined to be a still dearer purchase to the buyer than it had already proved.

"Is it brass?" exclaimed the latter, half-stifled by the bag in which his head was immersed, and yet anxiously alive to the investigation which was going forward.

"Indeed, then, it *is* brass, and *you're* brass, and bold brass that asks the question," returned he of the green coat. "No use in your talking, sir," he said in answer to the remonstrances of Segur, who made an effort at the liberation of his companion, not being aware that the fine grazier was one of those blockheads who think it manly and becoming to be obstinate, and cling to a misconception with the same sort of fatherly kindness which would induce them to stand by an ugly son in a scrape—"No use in your talking, I have taken the man in *flagrante delicto*, with the goods upon him, and my prisoner he shall remain for

this night at least. However, at your desire, as you profess a knowledge of his person, I will remove the blind from his eyes; and if you think you can be of service to him, I am going to spend the night at the house of my niece Miss Lilly Byrne, of Drumscanlon, on the Crag road."

"We are travelling the same way at all events," said Segnr, "so I will say no more on the subject until we arrive at the means of convincing you of this man's respectability. How he has chanced upon that ingot, I cannot conceive."

"We'll explain all at Lilly's table, at supper," said the man of the buckles, merrily, as they rode off (repaired at all points) together.

"At supper, inagh? An unaisy supper ye'll have of it, I'm thinkin," said the smith, shaking his head, and slowly re-entering the forge. "That's a bad matter for Suil Dhuv, whoever told the travellers about the shoes, the odds are against him now, any way."

CHAPTER VIII.

> See how the pangs of death do make him grin.
> ——If thou thinkest on heaven's grace
> Hold up thy hand—make signal of thy hope—
> He dies and makes no sign!
>
> *King Henry VI.*

The dinging of hammers, the creaking of stamping-presses, the rasping of files, and the low murmuring of human voices were the first sounds that assailed the ears of poor Kumba on his recovery from the stupor into which he had been cast by the practised hand of Red Rody. He opened his eyes, and gazed, still in a state of unconsciousness, upon the involutions of the dense culm of smoke that floated above him, and which, partially illustrated as it was at in-

tervals by the flickering blaze of the furnace, brought to his reviving imagination a thousand vague and wandering images that almost unconsciously referred themselves to his accident, a fatal termination, and an awakening in the centre of the new and fearful world to which his last terrified thoughts had been hurried, even in the agitation of the struggle itself. The illusion was not dissipated by the vision of the white-haired murderer, Rody, who tottered towards him, and remained for a few seconds gazing down upon him with as much steadiness as his palsy would suffer him to assume, and smiling through his chipped and bloodless lips, as the young man, from an instinct of apprehension checked the returning symptoms of animation, and suffered the half-raised lids once more to close over his eye-balls.

"What would you do if you had done for him, Rody, eroo?" asked a soft voice at the farther end of the room, the tones of which brought a pleasing association into Kumba's mind, as they resembled those which had pleaded for him in the fray with the Coiners.

"O, hugh! Oh, there's many a bit and a sup between him and the undertaker yit," said the old coiner. "I don't know what I'll do here, watchen. Jerry, I wish you went to the cupboord an brought us the makens of a jug o' punch. Ah, Jerry, Jerry, ould times, ould times for ever! Get us the dhew till we drink Redmond O'Hanlon in a big boomper. I saw him a week before he was shot in the barn, an' lashens o' *keogh* we had together, the two of us. *As I was*.....hugh! hugh! hugh! Eyeh! the voice is gone wit me now, Jerry, an' yet I used to sing wanst of a time——only this cough, and my back, O!——

'As I was sitting in my room,
All in the merry merry month o' June—
I heerd a thrush sing in a bush,
An' the song she sung was the Jug o' Poonch
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day
Tol fol ti- ridum! Dum fileum tay!'

Hugh! hugh! I'm afeerd o' waken the dacint lad here near me. How nate I could slip the windpipe now just where he lies, so quite an' easy. Aih, Jerry! look! jest as they does the sheep. I'd give you lave to hang me to that ratter, av he ever gave as mooch as a groan after it. Have you the poonch ready yit? Give it here! Hould my arm! O this shake! Isn't it droll I usn't uvur to have this cough and shake whin I was in the Small County, and wit the lads formerly?"

"How long is that ago now, Rody?" asked Jerry.

"Why thin, as good as thirty years, or from that to forty, and better, may be," the other answered musingly.

"An inch in a man's nose is a graat dale for all, Rody!" Jerry returned drily; "but still, it is a droll thing that a man should have more ailments an' things at sixty-eight than he had forty years before."

"Noan o' your funnen, you young colleen* you!—We can't expect to live always, and though I abn't seventy yet, I know I must die soom time or another. 'Tisn't age that always kills people, Jerry—and a man has no more a lase of his life at seventy than he has at a hoondred—'Ye jovial'—Gi' me the poonch, hugh! hugh!

'Ye jovial fellows that pass by,
Av ye don't b'live it—step in an thry!
Step in an' thry, an' nuvur flinch
To dip your nose in the jug o' poonch!
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day!
Tol fal ti ridum! Dum fileum tay!'

"No, Jerry," he continued, after elevating the fiery liquid to his lips and swallowing a prodigious draught; "I know I'm to have my day as well as another, and I mane to prepare for it too, and that's more than you thought, I b'lieve.

'When I am dead, an' in my grave,
No costly monumint will I *haive*—

* Little girl

But let my grave be short and sweet,
With a Jug o' Poonch at my head and feet!
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day!
Tol fal ti ridum! Dum fileum tay!"

I'll wait, Jerry, till I'm just seventy; an' thin I'll turn over a new lafe, and be quit o' those doens. I'll go to my Aister duty, an' I'll give three tinpennies to the priest, an' a tinpenny to the clark, an' a pair o' mould candles for the althar, and I'll have my bottle o' holy water, and my bades, and I'll make my rounds at Tubbermuirra Well at Candlemas, and I'll get my ashes ov an Ash Wensday, an' my bit o' palm ov a Palm Sunday, an' my little coal ov an Aister Saturday, an' my block at Christmass, an' I'll do like the Christhens for the rest o' my days; seeing would I do soomthen for the poor sowl agin she goes, be the dint o' pinnince; that's what I'll do, an' I'll rise out o' ye, and ye'r coinen an' murderen, all out, that's what I will."

"E' then, Rody, since that's what you're after, what should ail you that you wouldn't take a short stick in your hand, and be off at once, slap! like cock-shot agin a barn door?"

"Poh! didn't I say whin I was seventy all out? 'Tisn't far from me now, and—"

The interlocutors were cut short in their conference by a tapping at the little door. The word passed, and was answered by a female voice.

"'Tis the missiz herself!" said Jerry in amaze, as he opened the door.

The woman rushed into the room nearly in the same state of agitation as that in which she left the inn. Her hair, now perfectly dishevelled and dabbled in rain, hung loose upon her shoulders—her brow was torn by the briars, and stained with blood—her limbs shaking, and her large eyes wandering in eager scrutiny over every object that was presented to them, as she rapidly hurried from place to place.

"Where's—ha! Jerry—No—not you! Who's this? Rody—ha! bloodsucker! stand aside. Who's this?"

"Hush! hush!" both pointed to Kumba, and made signs to the woman to be silent.

"Who? Mr. Kumba? What! why is he not gone? Ha! blood too; O, I see it; Up, up, sir, up; you are betrayed and laughed at. Up, and come with me."

"Jerry, darlen, shet the doore, lock it, an' gi' me the kay," coughed out Red Rody.

"Jerry, leave the door open until Mr. Kumba and I have passed through, if you value your neck," said the woman fiercely.

"'Deed, ma'am, av I'm a *bloodsucker* I'll do my duty, I have an old knack that way," said Rody, sulkily hobbling towards the door.

"Bloodsucker, that you are (and it is a riddle to me that you should be stung by another giving you a name that is your own boast,) stand from the door. Do you know me?"

"I know your husband better," growled the ruffian.

"Then, mind me—if you fear his anger obey me."

"I don't know what rilashun they have at all, wan to another, your commands and his anger," muttered the palsied wretch, placing his back to the door, and examining the lock of a large horse pistol.

"If you will not release this gentleman, Suil Dhuv shall never see my face again."

"O thin, who knows whether that's what would bring his anger upon us?" the old fellow said chuckling.

"Ha!" exclaimed the woman, "I thought it, I knew it," and she slapped her hands together like one who had suddenly solved an agonizing doubt. "I'm sold, and his friend is betrayed. Thank you husband, I've caught you, sir. Up, up, Mr. Kumba. Right yourself, sir, if you're a man. There's your enemy," she clapped the startled youth upon the shoulder, and pointed to Red Rody, who maintained his defensive position.

Kumba, whose disgust had been at first strongly excited by the approach of his false friend's wife, was not sufficiently disabled by the effects of the blow he had received to prevent his gathering from the conversation a perfect knowledge of his situation, and of the motives of the Suil Dhuv. The one fired, the other strengthened him. He looked first at Jerry, who stood irresolute, and apparently disposed to neutrality, in the corner; and having satisfied himself that there was no determined opposition to be apprehended from that quarter, he waved his hand to Rody to stand aside: the other, influenced by his natural or acquired habits of violence—and stimulated still more highly by the potations in which he had been indulging, refused to obey, and elevated the pistol with a menacing look.

Without bestowing a more serious thought on the chances of a struggle than he would have experienced before whipping a cur from his path, Kumba, darted on the old man, caught him by the breast, and sent him spinning round against the press. There was a report of a pistol, a sudden hurrying together of several figures, a scream, a hoarse curse, a crashing of bolts and stamping of many feet, and the place was clear of all but the fair-faced Jerry and the old man, whom he upheld apparently with an effort from the floor.

"'Twas Heaven did it, and not the gentleman," said Jerry; "how do you feel yourself, Rody, a gra?"

"Aih? O poorly, wisha, poorly enough, Jerry, thanky."

"It's late for pinnince now I'm afeerd, Rody?"

"Wisha, I'm afeerd so, I abn't very well, I abn't meself at all rightly."

"No wondher, sure. There's a hole in your neck here as big as a button. How coom you to handle the pistil so awkward, Rody?"

"Wisha, I dun know. It went off betune my fingers someway, very foolish. Hould me up a little. There's a great wakeness comen upon me all of a hape intirely."

"Don't say so, Rody, eroo. Will I run for the priest?"

"Aih? . . . priest? O! Eh, Jerry eroo, what's that in the dark?"

"Where, eroo?"

"Look, agra! Look at Tim Henessy! Look at him shaken his head at me!"

"Tim Hene-sy, inagh? Erra, is it the man you murthered that would be there?" said Jerry, in a tone of remonstratory astonishment.

"Not Guilty, my lord and gintlemin, 'twasn't I did it. Was it, Jerry? Aih, O stand betune uz, Jerry, *alanuv!* It's no use, for here's Mickey Keys at the other side o' me grinnen' down on me!"

"Well, that's the crackedest thing I ever heerd, Rody. Didn't you shoot him stone dead with your own hand, and now to be sayen' he's there grinnen'. He has soomthen' else to do besides maken' them faces."

"Would you have a loand o' the whiskey bottle you'd give us, Jerry? Stay! Aisy a while! O the pain, the pain, entirely, you see, that's what's killen' me. I'm getting very could, Jerry. 'Tisn't freezen' agin I believe?"

"Freezen'!" shouted Jerry, "d'ye hear what he calls the finest, soft, moist evenen' that? Eh! why Rody, Rody. I say agin! what's the matter? Rody! Stir up, man. He's dyen', I b'lieve, O murther, entirely, he's goen', he's stiff'nen'."

He paused and gazed on the dying wretch, who remained in his arms gasping for breath, while he stared fearfully on the broad black darkness above him, which his memory, now for the first time startled from her sleep of indifference by the baying of the hell-hound Conscience, had peopled with the shadows of his many victims. He shrunk back, shivered, dropped his jaws, which clattered like a pair of castanets, his lips became dragged and livid, his teeth set, and he lay stark and cold in the arms of the terrified accomplice of his crimes, and witness of his blas-

phemies, a horrible spectacle of the sudden vengeance of a long-suffering but wakeful Providence.

The black speck which the Coiner's wife had indicated in the red evening sunlight, was now a broad mass of vapour, darkening the region of the tempests from one point of the horizon to the other, and presenting, in the swift gradations of its progress from insignificance to grandeur, a magnificent and terrific emblem of the spreading dominion of crime in the human soul, from the slight neglect of a wandering thought in devotion to the awful and tumultuous blackness of impenitent despair itself. The first thin sheeted flashes of a reddish lightning had begun to quiver and play on the gloomy expanse, revealing at fitful intervals the jags and unevennesses of the otherwise undistinguishable fragments of vapour in a thousand fantastical images. Our travellers, who had advanced little more than a mile from the inn before these changes began to make themselves visible, looked upon them with no little anxiety, originating however in very different conditions of feeling and situation. The old Palatine, whose determination to proceed appeared to increase in proportion to the obstacles which amassed on his route, and the arguments which were employed to dissuade him, observed a profound silence; and except by an impatient glance or gesture which he used on every trifling pause made by his companions, seemed almost unconscious of their presence. Mr. Shine, whose spirits had not yet recovered the shock which the discovery of Maney's cheat had occasioned him, remained pinioned on his pony, riding between both the "*robineen redbreasts*," as the gentleman of the wig and buckles termed his myrmidons—the little canvas bag, or John Doe, hanging down over his back in the fashion of a hood, and fully prepared, in case of any attempt to recover his liberty, of which the Cork grazier appeared singularly apprehensive, to be restored to its ancient use by a slight check of the string which

was suspended from his neck. The fine gentleman was the only talkative person of the party. He rode on—hung back—trotted from side to side—made an unheeded observation in the ear of the pensive Segur on the state of the weather—intimated to Shine in a menacing way the utter fruitlessness of any corporeal resistance against his captors, whispered his men to be on their guard, for that big fat man was the strongest "warrant" at a hurley, and the best leaper in all Ireland—then, having exhausted every subject that might be suggested by the circumstances of each of his companions, without eliciting any considerable portion of information, he fell back as a last resource upon himself—arranged his wig—adjusted his sword belt, looked up at the heavens—loosened the string of a tightly-packed *loody* or great-coat—and trembled for his head-gear—gave a history in detail of the lives, characters, fortunes, and fashions of all the master tailors in Cork—struck off by a by-road to the price of pigs and cattle—convinced the passive Shine by the most unexceptionable syllogisms that twenty geese would consume, to a blade, as much grass as any cow—that bony pigs were always the best to buy on a fattening speculation—that bog dust was as fine manure as any for a red soil—that it was the greatest mistake to say the Limerick girls were the handsomest in Ireland—that the lightning was perfectly innocuous, as long as it maintained its reddish hue—that Catholicism, particularly as regarded Lent and Advent, was everything but a reasonable creed—[the only point on which he obtained the semblance of an answer from the preacher]—that Dean Swift would be hanged as sure as there was a cottoner in Cork, and there were plenty, sure, and good ones, too—that he himself was the most fashionable personage in the South of Ireland—and Lord Cartaret, the best Lord-Lieutenant that ever lived before or after the flood—and a thousand other *thats* with which the necessities of our tale will not permit us to encumber the reader's mind.

On a sudden a blue straggling light darted across the heavens, and a deep, rending crash of thunder seemed to tear the region from one extremity to the other. The unchecked and absolute blackness which ensued, left the party in so benighted a condition that all stopt short, as if by a sympathy of intelligence. The horses, startled by the suddenness of the transition, chafed, demi-volted, and finally remained stock still under their riders, snorting and champing the bit in the impatience of strong terror. A moment after, as if the windows of heaven had been opened for a second deluge, a torrent of thunder drops was poured upon the travellers, so dense, so sudden, and so unflinchingly continued, that each particular individual in his own square foot of space received as much as would have served him for a bath.

The terrors of the storm now commenced in all their magnitude and grandeur. The thunder bellowed, howled, and clattered; the lightning flared, and darted in wheeling circles and angles of painful brilliancy, before and about them. Sometimes a strong bolt, launched from the black womb of the vapour in which it was generated, hissed fiercely through the sparkling rain, and breaking with a rapid violence into a thousand lines of blue and dazzling splendour, lit up the vaulted vast of darkness into a momentary noon, which was as suddenly changed to a gloom as dense as that which was made palpable in the hands of the Egyptian spoilers. Then there was the silence of a second, deep and terrible, a hush of all nature, unbroken even by the breathing of the pale and anxious wanderers, and immediately after, a rattling close above their heads, at first quick, harsh, and jarring, like the clatter of a musket volley, and gradually deepening and swelling as it receded, till its echoes boomed in the abyss of distance like the roar of a million park of artillery.

"Whish! hoo!" the grazier exclaimed, placing his hand above his ear, and endeavouring to check the plunging of

his steed; "did any body hear a 'holloo' behind us? Ha, there it is again!"

"'Tis the wind that's splitting itself upon the Corrig-on-Dhiol,"* said one of his retainers.

Another thunderclap drowned the response to this conjecture, and in the intervals of its expiring peals, the distant and long-protracted cry of a man's voice proved it to be an erroneous one.

"I have my reasons," said the Palatine with a gesture of alarm, laying his hand on the grazier's arm, "for not delaying an instant. Let us dash forward, in the name of Heaven!"

Again the imploring cry, renewed at a much more audible distance, seemed to appeal against this selfish counsel to the good feelings of the party. It was not altogether the influence of mere good feeling, however, which induced the obstinate gentleman of the sword and buckles to enter his *recusat* against the old Palatine's proposition. The slighting taciturnity with which the latter had treated him during the journey had predisposed him to adopt the contrary course, whatever it might be, to any which should be recommended by the old man. He plucked his arm pettishly away from the grasp of the latter, and instantly reined up his steed. Either unwilling to persevere in what appeared an unkindly procedure, or acting under the guidance of that piercing sagacity which enables some men to discover in a glance, a tone, a gesture—nay, in the very manner of an affectation itself, a tolerable indication of the whole machinery of the characters of those with whom they come in contact—acting, I say, under this influence, and perceiving the absolute hopelessness of any attempt to oversway the dogged resolution of the blockhead with whom he travelled, the old Palatine made no further effort to carry his own wishes into effect, but suffered their pursuess to approach.

"They're at the top o' the hill already! I hear the

* Devil's Crag.

tramping o' the horse's feet—Whisht! Dash along! Naught was never in danger. Take care how you fall. Never welcome the thunder; will it never have done bellowing, and let us hear the people?"

"Hulloo-ee—hoo—hoo-ee!"

"Hoo—hoo-ee! here, lad! Halt! ho! Will you never stop—ha! the fair sex—Fong a foil! Where are you—?"

The query was cut short by the sudden onset of a large, stout-limbed horse, which dashed furiously through the group, covering the dandy grazier and his prisoner with a profusion of the puddle, struck by the concussion of the animal's broad hoofs from the weltering ruts of the old and broken road. As they swept thus fiercely through the group, the horse chafing, snorting, and furiously contending against the restraint of the tightened rein, the rider by voice and action using every possible endeavour to restrain him, the gentleman of the wig and sword execrating both in the purest Gaelic, and the poor discomfited Shina patiently moaning within his compressed lips at this new misfortune; while these relative sounds, we say, proceeded, a sudden rent was made in the cloud immediately above them, and a volume of electric light was poured upon the spot, so intense and brilliant, as for a few seconds to enable each individual of the party to peruse in minute detail every portion of the person and accoutrements of the rest. For those few seconds, the Palatine, whose eye was fixed in all the keenness of an acute curiosity upon the new comers, was enabled to discern the figure of a young man, keeping a firm seat on the wild steed, which it seemed to require an exertion almost as much of strength as of skill to govern, and endeavouring at the same time to uphold from the earth the crouching form of a female who sat before him, whose low, hurried, and agitated moans, mingling in the pause of the thunder peal, produced a strange admixture of involuntary pity and terror on the mind of the hearer.

"Murther, murther alive! only see where he has the female!" ejaculated the Cork gentleman.

"'Tis he! 'tis they! Join them and hasten, sir, for Heaven's sake," said the woman, clinging to her protector, and gathering her turned-up wrapper hood-wise about her face for the purpose, as it seemed, of keeping off the heavy rain which poured in torrents upon her, and shading its features at the same time from the strong light.

"A bad night, gentlemen," said the young man, wishing to assure himself of the identity of those whom he addressed.

"If you'd tell us news, we'd thank you," returned the *buck*. "And pray what was your business with us, or who are you at all? We have the right of challengers, by all the rules of right tactics. Witness the catechumen's proverb—

'Who goes there?'
'A grenadier!'
'What do you want?'
'A bottle o' beer!'
'Where's your money?'
'In my pocket.'
'Where's your pocket?'
'I forgot it.'

Answer speedily, sir, lest you become liable to the application of the catechist's concluding octo-syllabic—

'Gid-a-gone, you foolish blockhead!'"

"You are the merriest man in a thunder-storm I ever saw," said the new-comer; "but I think if you are disposed to proceed, we may as well dash forward. Your merriment will do little to wring the drenching rain from my poor fellow-traveller's slight dress—"

"O—hush! hush!" whispered the woman, "do not speak of me. I feel nothing. I am used to this. But, for Heaven's sake, spur on your horse. They will follow."

"I don't know what may be the customs of the ladies

of Limerick," placidly continued the *buck*, "but in the County Cork it would be considered an instance of questionable taste to select such an evening as this for an excursion. Here, sir," tossing his *loody* to the young man, "the choice is between a female and my new wig, and as I'm an Irishman, I'd rather have it hanging as lank as a cow's tail down my back in the morning, than that one curl of the humblest creature that ever wore bonnet should receive a section from a single drop of such a torrent as this."

"The *buckeeny* has a spark o' the gentleman in him, for all!" observed the taciturn Abie Switzer, (the first remark, by the way, for which we have been enabled to afford him space during the entire day).

"Do you travel on the Crag Road?" inquired the stranger, after he had wrapped the coat about his suffering *protegee*.

"As far as Drumscanlon, where I can make as many welcome as the house can accommodate—Ay, and more too, for poor old Byrne isn't——"

"We may as well, I think, be riding forward as we talk," said old Segur.

"If we stay this way," added Abie, "there'll one of us be roasted for the rest for supper."

"Whoever that poor woman is, sir," continued the Palatine, "it would be as well if she turned on the other side, for the wind blows on *that*."

"The blessings of a broken heart fall on you!" murmured the woman, as her protector took the old man's hint.

"Bless him, does she? Why, she did not so much as say 'thanky, kindly,' to me for the loan o' my coat!" muttered the grazier, as he shrugged up his shoulders, and felt the rain already penetrating his green broadcloth.

The whole party proceeded as rapidly as the starting, rearing, plunging, and *shying* of their steeds would permit. The lightning flashes, which still continued momently glancing in various degrees of brilliancy upon their path,

forming a very sufficient apology for the contumacy of the animals.

"I was saying," said the Cork gentleman, "that poor Byrne usn't to limit his invitations to the dimensions of his house. Many and many a night; you don't hear me, sir?" he continued, pressing close to the young man, "many a pleasant night, after tiring down every girl in the hall at a slip-jig, I've stretched myself abroad in the hay-loft as comfortable as could be, and the Blaneys of the Hill in the cow-house under me, with such joking and laughing. The fowl-house was a great place for us too, I remember. Old Missiz Hasset (that was hardly young Mrs. Hasset then)—and by the way, talking of her, she's at Drumscanlon to-night, moreover, or ought to be—used to have the ticks and quilts brought out o' the cars, and made up snug and cozy among the turkeys, and the rest o' them, for the neighbours; and sometimes we'd have little Lilly herself—Hirruns, sir! keep your horse steady, if you please!—we'd have little Lilly Byrne her-self, a fine little curly-headed rogue, little merry-eyes, as I used to call her, coming out o' the door, and laughing. Poor Lilly! I recollect saying to her, one day, while I was tossing her on my toe, and she laughing, and crowing, and her hair flying about her, and her cheeks as rosy as a rose itself. I remember saying to her, says I, 'the day will come yet, when a lock o' that hair will be a prouder gift for a young man to wear, than a coat of Buckmaster*; the day will come,' says I, and I looking at her this way, in the face, 'the day will come when that eye will make many a gallant heart ache, and many a young man's cheek grow pale,' says I, and I looking at her, thinking of it—'and when that lip that's there, so innocent, will have the word of life or death upon it—isn't that great?'—and she laughing, not understanding a word o' what I said, and sure 'twas all true for me."

* The reader may, if he pleases, imagine an ancestor of the present respectable fashionist in Bond-street.

The grazier did not know what a sincere and agonized assent his words received in the heart of the poor young man who rode by his side.

"I think," continued the talkative bore, who wished, indeed very pardonably, to divert his attention from the now perfectly piteous condition to which he felt himself reduced, by the exercise of a tongue

> 'As true as truest horse,
> That yet would never tire.'

"I think," said he, "Lilly will verify my prophecy, if she has not done it yet. But poh! what's the use of talking? I saw her when I came this way the other day, and 'twould puzzle the Danes to tell what was come over her. Her cheek, sir—her plump, ripe cheek—that you might play a hand of fives against, so worn down and pale-looking—and her little hand so damp and cold as she put it into mine; and such a death-like, religious smile about her sweet lips; and then, instead of meeting me with a jump, and a hop, and a laugh, and that little merry 'hoop!' that used to come from between her lips, as sweet as love itself, sir, and as fine as a gold thread, she met me as her mother might have done—standing upright on both her feet, putting one before the other when she walked—and having no more of the merry hoyden that I knew, left about her, but only all her sweetness. You'd wonder to look at her. I didn't take my eyes off her for as good and better than an hour. Her eyes were a little red, too. 'Twould move you, sir, if you were to be looking at her."

"It does! it does!" replied his companion, in a tone of deep feeling.

"Sir, I'm sure you're a gentleman," said the grazier warmly, at once attributing to the influence of his own pathos in the narration, all the effect which the circumstances themselves had produced upon his auditor——"I'm sure you are, and I like you. The fact, however, may be

naturally explained, as in honest truth, her mother did account for it to me, in a confidential way. Talking of confidence, by the bye, I'll not tell you what she said, for these things, however trifling they may appear to men of sense, are not likely to be serviceable, when spoken of to the class of unmarried girls. And after all it is but a girlish fancy, which will go off with the next fine weather. In the affections, as in grazing, the autumnal produce is always the sweetest. A girl's first love is too sudden, too luxuriant, sir—it is parched and dried up in its own fire—there's no health about it—but mow that away with a few months' absence—let the heart be trampled a little—let the soft showers of disappointment fall upon it—and then you have it as fresh, and kind, and gentle as a field of upland clover."

"A thorough grazier's sentiment," said Kumba, almost involuntarily, within his own heart. "When was this, sir?" he asked, aloud.

"A few days since, I was at Drumscanlon. I made Lilly laugh at last, reminding her of the time when I used to bring her the *bareen brac** and tell her the story of the wee-wee woman and her bunch o' black-berries. By the way, they were expecting the priest there at that time; for you must know, Lilly is grown so pious, that they're beginning to think she'll make a fair run for a convent, some fine morning. But we'll talk more o' this by an by. We'll be late for supper, I'm afraid."

The party quickened their pace.

* Spotted cake. Bread made with flour and raisins mingled. It is one of the festive delicacies of Christmas times in Ireland.

CHAPTER IX.

> Confusion now hath made his master-piece—
> Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
> The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
> The life o' the building!
>
> *Shakespeare.*

THERE is a proverb current among the Irish peasantry, which, as we have not been in the habit of obtruding these aphorisms of vulgar wisdom upon him hitherto, the reader will excuse our transcribing. It runs, in English, something in this way—"Carry a goat to the chapel, and he never will stop until he mounts the altar." The truth of the axiom is more frequently exemplified in the annals of Irish crime, than, perhaps, in those of most other nations. The reason of this may be found in the simple fact, that Irish crime, like Irish virtue, is not the creature of the mind but of the heart. They are a people more frequently betrayed into guilt by the impulses of strong feeling, than the cold suggestions of convenience; and in proportion to the violence of the stimulus applied, will be found the depth and atrocity of the outrage that is committed. For the same reason also, it appears that instances of a cold-hearted attachment to guilt, having no more immediate motive than habitude, are, proportionably to the extent of crime existing, very rare. The ruffian who has been lashed, through his course of blood and outrage, by the hand of circumstance, is liable, when the scourge is withdrawn, and a pause is left him for reflection, to sudden accesses of self-detestation and remorse, which would seldom be experienced by one whose guilt was determined before it was acted, and whose career had been the election, in any degree, of deliberate reason. By following in the steps of the unhappy wretch, whose *alias* has furnished us with a name for this tale, through the following pages, the reader may find an

illustration of both the idiosyncrasies we have attempted to account for, the capability of utter abandonment of all moral principle, and liability to a sudden change of feeling in the very head and front of the criminal's offending:—a hue of national character, which is only wanting in wretches so completely regenerated in depravity, as the white-haired murderer – Red Rody.

We should also have called the reader's attention to the fact which is perfectly observable at the present day, as we may suppose it to have been at the period of which we write—that when those Irishmen, who live by a misappropriation of the goods of others, meet together for the purpose of agitating an excursion in the way of their vocation, they do not confine themselves to a solitary outrage, but calculate upon effecting all that may be accomplished within the period to which they limit their absence; insomuch, that robberies, and perhaps murders, sometimes take place on the same night at places so remote from each other, that it would almost appear sufficient to prove a man's identity as a partner in the one, to enable him to enter an *alibi* on the other offence.

Suil Dhuv and his three companions had more to accomplish on this evening than the reader has already been made aware of, and one, the first, act of violence which they proposed committing, was of a peculiar and more startling nature than any in which the Coiner had yet been engaged.

He had accorded an instant and even eager assent when the proposition was first made by one of the gang, Mun Maher, the fellow whose insolence he had checked by so summary a procedure in the hold of the gang. He had then, however, only considered the advantage which was to be derived from it, namely, the acquisition of a sufficient quantity of silver for the purpose of carrying on their illegal toil. Upon the means he had not bestowed a single thought, after he had once satisfied himself of their practicability.

As he rode, however, along the country with his companions, a new train of circumstances conspired to shake him from the indifference in which he had fortified his spirit. The very agitation of the contemplated enterprise in which his personal wishes were chiefly interested, was calculated to prepare the way in his breast for the admission of a gentler tone of feeling, than he usually carried about him on such expeditions. The district which they were approaching, and which speedily began to spread its well-cultivated and party-coloured surface before their eyes, was the soil in which his childhood had been passed; and memories of childhood hours—whether those hours have been spent in darkness or light—in showers or sunshine—are the truest key that can be found to draw forth from their rugged prison the yet surviving tendernesses of the human heart.

As they wound along the side of a craggy hill, composed of a brittle, calmy soil, Suil Dhuv drew up his horse, as if for the purpose of making some observations, but in reality with the view of indulging himself in a musing contemplation of the quiet evening landscape, which, independently of any associations, presented a picture sufficiently alluring to account for the action, had *that* been its only motive. Immediately beneath them, on the right, and extending far into the distance, lay a well-nurtured and fertile champaign, rich in all the glorious hues of ripening summer—the dark green potato-field—the already russet meadow—the golden rape—the bearded barley, billowing in the light wind and receiving from the reddish sunlight a variety of light and shade, such as that which charmed the bright eyes of the Dublin beauties, when first the master of the chain and *filling* conjured from his loom, in all its shadowy magnificence and cameleon-like insecurity of hue, the now forlorn and neglected *tabinet*—these, together with the glitter of cottage windows through the bowering and close mantled hedges of black briar—periwinkle, primrose, hawthorn, and red-blossomed snuff-weed, the virgin meadow-sweet,

wild strawberries, wild heart's ease, and dog-roses ; the wreathing of the light blue smoke through the humble chimney, which gave an involuntary feeling of comfort to the spectator—the flax garden, with its delicate stems and pale-blue flower—the ridges (drills were then unknown) of early white-eyes, already delighting the eye with their white, purple, and peach-coloured blossoms—all refreshing the organs of smell with a sweetness which (but perhaps, *that* was the result of association)—we have vainly sought to mate among the exotics of Kensington—these, I say, presented a beautifully variegated and gigantic tablet, over which many a mountain stream unrolled its sparkling scroll, intersecting the superfice at a thousand fantastic angles.

On the other side lay a bog on which many groups of peasantry were observed at work—some *footing*, or raising the *sods* of turf on end, for the purpose of drying more rapidly ; some cutting the material fresh from the mass with their *slanes** others shaping sods from the soft pulpy soil with their hands—others again tossing the dry turf into a *rail*, a sort of vehicle fastened in a *car* (or cart), for the purpose of having it conveyed home, and built up into a snug reek as a provision against the winter—while the driver stood near the horse's head, lazily looking on, his cord-whip tied sashwise across his shoulder, and whistling the keen-the-cawn, in a loud, full, and melodious tone, to the drooping and weary animal, who expressed his pleasure at the attention, by a gentle oscillating motion of the ears, as he mused over a handful of soil† plucked from the nearest hedge, a kindness which in all probability he appreciated still more highly than the music.

The occasional shrill scream of a nesting snipe, startled from its rushy hiding-place by the too near approach of some hostile footstep—the merry barking of the curs of the hamlet, as they gambolled, in feigning warfare, in the sun-

* A kind of spade made for the purpose.

† A kind of long grass.

shine—the "thrup, thrup!" of the milk-maid, as with *spancel* and can in hand, she summoned the cows from their distant pasture, to deposit their evening tribute at the farmer's door—the kindly lowing of the docile animals, as they turned from their fodder, and with matronly and gentle pace, obeyed the well-known voice of the summoner—the occasional snatch of a wild and merry ballad from some pleasantly disposed individual of the laborious group in the bog—the loud though distant peal of laughter that cheered him in his exertions—the shrill and solitary cackling of some forlorn goose, that had lagged, like a *miching* urchin, behind the flock, and now lost sight of its companions—the droning sound of the little boy's reeds cut from the green corn stems, and slit in the manner of a flageolet—the plaintive and monotonous cry of some wren's-man or yellow-hammer, that, compelled to forsake its nest, tainted by the touch of some prying school-boy, mourned its desolation on some lofty thorn—the occasional shrilly shouting of a group of sturdy boys at their game of evening *goal* or *hurly*—the sweet and murmuring voices of the peasant girls on the side of the distant stream, some washing the *skeogh* (or boat-basket), full of potatoes for their evening meal, and sometimes in a merry mood, shaking the *crusheen** with a gesture of menace at the lads on the other side; others beetling their linen on a smooth stone, and others again spreading the already whitened garments upon the yellow and blooming furze bushes—those formed the principal points of sight and of sound which were scattered over the face of the landscape, while the whole was spanned by a soft blue sky chequered with flakes of white and crimson vapour, and rendered still more lovely by the loaded serenity that was in the air.

Touched by the tender beauty of the scene which lay before him, and still more by the recollections which it awakened within his soul, Suil Dhuv prolonged his pause to

* A short stick with a flat piece of timber at the end, used in washing potatoes.

a degree which at length excited the impatience of his companions.

"They're not beginnen to light up the fires yit," said one.

"What fires?" inquired Mun Maher.

"Why, the fires upon the mountains and places, in regard of St. John's Eve. Sure this is the twinty-third—the Eha-na-Shawn. 'Twill be a bad evenen for it, I'm afeerd. Do you see the swallows how low they're skimmen? and—*fioch-e-shin!*—look there, the dog eating the grass."

"Come, sir!—Suil Dhuv! Don't you hear uz? 'Twill be late with us, I'm thinken, sir. The chapel is in the glyn over, a good start from uz yit."

"Have you the wrench and hammer?" inquired their leader, in a low tone.

"Safe enough, I'll be bail—Look at them!"

"It is a fair evening for so foul a deed!" thought Suil Dhuv, but he *only* thought it, for he was too well aware of the temper of his men to hazard anything like an indication of distaste for the enterprise they were engaged upon.

"There is no use in tiring *all* the horses," he said, as they descended the hill, and approached a cross road. "Mun, you and I will do this first business together, and, my lads, ye may as well stop here for us, or ride round the road and meet us at the Hill o' Drumscanlon."

Both the men touched their hats in token of assent.

"And there's no fear, sir, of the travellers' getten the start of uz?"

"Make yourself easy on that head—I drew the charges myself, and saw Maney filing the clenching of the hoof-nails with my own eyes."

"O if that's the case, we may count it done—Maney's was the sure finger if he touched them. I see him at work at 'em meself the other day, an' he grinnen like a horse aten thistles—the day of the blind man, you know, sir, in the glyn below."

Suil Dhuv started and turned pale. The recollection of

the act to which the man alluded had often before now occurred to him, but never in a similar state of feeling. He put spurs to his horse, and rode on with Mun Maher, the last speaker and his companion remaining on the spot, and looking after them with some surprise.

"He's afraid he'll be late at the chapel," said one to the other—"but let us ride round, fair an aisy, as he says, and, stay, we have time enough, we'll just step into the shebeen house over," pointing to a little wretched cabin, in the exterior of which no further indication could be discovered of its claims to the consideration of a caravansery, than the broken bottle which was stuck in the thatch, and a little piece of turf wrapped in a brown paper, and dangling from one of the *scollops** over the low doorway. "There'll nobody see uz there, an I'm so dhry I could drink faster thin a lime-burner's bag."

When once a certain train of feeling has been laid in the soul, it is extraordinary to observe what a slight accession of circumstances are required to stimulate and strengthen it until it has acquired a mastery over the judgment and the will itself. Every new sight, every new sound, that arrested the sense of the Coiner as he pursued his route with his companion, served to confirm him in the disposition to mournful retrospection which the simple accident of a fine sunny evening, and the revisiting a soil untrod by him for many a year, had occasioned within his heart. The cornfields, yet in ear, where he had been stationed, while yet a child, to terrify, by the clattering of two flat stones, the dark-plumed plunderers of the neighbouring rookery from his patron's tillage—the very meadows in which he had assisted at harvest time in filling the load of sweet hay on the car, for the purpose of stacking in the *haggart*—the paddock to which he had been dispatched on many an evening as fine as this, with an armful of grass for the weaning lambs, and a pot of milk and hay-water for the young

* Or, "squeeze-loops," little osier twigs used in binding the thatch,

calves—the very sally-grove where he was accustomed to walk and chat with her whom he had lured from her father's door (a door that had opened so hospitably to him in his necessities)—and whom he was now preparing to desert—all these objects acted like fire upon the remorse that was already beginning to fester within the bosom of the guilty wanderer.

A crooked and (still) broken-up avenue leading to a farm house near the road side, was the next object that caught his eyes—and he again involuntarily slackened his pace, for the purpose of gazing upon the dwelling. The place was as familiar to him as his own home would have been—indeed, it was a house in which a very considerable number of the years of his unsettled boyhood had been spent; but it was sadly changed in appearance from what it had been when he first beheld it in his young days. It was then a sweet cottage—embowered in foliage and fragrance—with all the indications of rural comfort and content about it. It had now a desolate and uninhabited air. The neat plot before the door was half converted into tillage, and the remainder disfigured and turned up by the grunting burghesses of the adjacent piggery. A muddy pool had settled under the front windows, in which a few meagre-looking ducks were dabbling and diving in silence. The hedge which encompassed the plot was broken and torn up, and at one spot, had completely given way, blocking up almost half the avenue with its ruins. The elder-tree, beneath which he had constructed a summer-seat which he often shared with the pretty daughter of his host, was now reduced to a stump. The house itself was stript of its decent garment of rough-casting—the thatch beaten in at several places—and the chimneys dismantled: these emblems of decay, together with the silence that reigned over the place, struck new feelings of melancholy into the young man's spirit.

"All was still
But the lattice that flapped when the wind was shrill;
Though raves the gust and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again."

A single poplar which stood erect in its graceful slenderness of form in the centre of the little plain, like a gnomon on a dial-plate, flung its lengthened shadow in a direct line toward the front door. The Coiner started unconsciously as he observed it, for that was the indication of the expiry of the sixth hour in the afternoon. Breathing a short, quick sigh, he checked the reins of his steed, which was making advantage of the meditative disposition of its rider, to crop a mouthful of herbage from the hedge over which he was gazing, and hurried forward with a spirit still more disabled than it had been before his arrival at this spot, for the dreadful task to which he had endeavoured to bend up the energies of his nature.

He was doomed, nevertheless, to experience still farther and more heart-shaking disquietudes. As he approached the spot which was destined to be the scene of the first act of the guilty drama of the night, his attention was directed by his companion to a little *fort* on their right, which Mun pointed out with a grim smile and nod of the head, as much as to say—"'Twas a good job that was done there, sir." The situation of the spot was such as might, without farther explanation from the speaker, have intimated the nature of that "good" deed. As Suil Dhuv raised his head in obedience to the light tap of his companion's whip, and looked around him for the first time since he had left the cottage, he was chilled and startled by the sudden alteration which appeared to have taken place in the face of the country, and the stern and sullen contrast which the scene he now beheld presented to that on which his fancy and his memory had been luxuriating a short time before. The verdure, the beauty, the sights of promise and of plenty, and the sounds of mirth and light-

heartedness, had vanished as completely as if the wand of a malicious wizard had been laid over the face of the picture. Before the traveller's, at a few perches distant, lay a long, deep, straggling glyn, covered with heath, bramble, short hazel bushes, sloe trees, wild crab, and other stunted and dark-looking individuals of the family of underwood. A brown, boggy stream crept, then bounded, now rippled, then roared, and again murmured at various points of its winding progress through the sullen cleft—its dark waters, in several instances, narrowing and chafing against the ledges of crag, into a snow white foam, little masses of which floated down the black stream, like solitary virtues on the gloomy river of a bad world's history. The sun, which had chequered with so many sweet varieties of light and shade, the landscape he had left behind, served here only to increase the dreary dulness of the scene. A flat boggy plain or *inch* (a plot of level ground lying near the marge of a rivulet)—covered with a long tabid grass, which is indigenous to such a soil, and assumes the appearance of hay already dry, while it is yet in the act of vegetating, spread its dusky tablet on their left, at the foot of a rocky eminence, while the stream, forming a small semicircle around it, cut it sharply away from the base of a steep and bare cliff, over the summit of which, adorned with a coronal of the red-berried mountain ash, the heavy sunlight darted its sloping rays, which, corrected as they were by the mistiness of the place to a still more hazy faintness, threw an air of slight and softening indistinctness over the rugged outlines of the scene. Near the base of this cliff, in a dark angle on which the light had a still more limited influence than on the more exposed features of the picture, stood a thatched chapel, a plain oblong pile with a small iron cross fastened at the top of the gable, into which the door, an unpanneled plane of timber, marked with the same sacred symbol in red paint, was made to open A narrow road, winding down the hill, formed

the approach to this humble temple—and a straggling path, presenting a short cut in this road, from the spot where the Coiner stood, ran almost under their horses' feet. This was pointed out by Maher, who dismounted, and flung the stirrups over the high pummelled saddle of his horse, as he observed it. Suil Dhuv followed his example, and threw the reins of his steed to his companion:—

"Remain here until I r turn," said he; "and if any danger should approach, do not forget, for your life, to give me the token. Where are the things?"

Maher handed him a wrenching iron, a bundle of picks, a file, and small hammer.

"It's a droll* thing if they were left there," the Coiner continued. "Wouldn't they be safer in his own chest?"

"Is it Father O'Regan's? No, indeed—I heard Watty the clerk say meself, that he was afeerd of 'em there, in regard o' the Dillons that he denounced from the althar o' count o' their nightwalken. There's no harm in thryen at any rate; and besides, the priest puts great trust in the chapel above all other places—for as he said himself, though there's a power o' villyans goen, there's *few* o' them that are wanten both in the *fear* and *love* o' God together."

"Ha! ha! he did not know you or me, Maher," said Suil Dhuv, striving by a painful exertion to laugh away the dark remorse that made the perspiration stand and glisten upon his brow. "Walk the horses softly here, and I'll be with you in ten minutes." And bounding over the stile, he hurried along the path towards the road.

"That's the quarest laugh I ever heerd him langh yit," said Mun Maher, in soliloquy as he gazed after the ruffian: "I wonder now, could it be anythen that would be comen over him, afther all? Isn't it greatly he was thinken all along the road?"

Something, most assuredly, *was* "coming over" the young man in question, some (to himself) unaccountable

* Extraordinary

state of feeling, a distress, an alarm, an uneasiness, which he could trace to no possible external influence, and which went on deepening and fastening upon his spirit in proportion to the violence of the exertions which he made to shake it off. He thought of his past crimes with pain and deep remorse; but it was not of that healthy kind which induces a longing after the peace of penitence, and casts a stumbling-block in the way of a guilty purpose.

On the contrary, the deeper and the fiercer the pangs were, which every reviving recollection struck into his heart, the more he raged and chafed, the firmer and more daring his resolution became; and even while his limbs shook with fear at thought of the retribution he had already earned, he burned with the eagerness of his desire, to cast another yet heavier debt than all into the already fearful account. His soul might be supposed, in this respect, in a state of disease analogous to that which induces the patient who is suffering under the affliction of an acute nervous attack, to fling himself on the fire, dash his head against the wall, or use any other violent means of counteracting, by a different though still more terrible excitement, the anguish of that which is already preying upon his frame.

As he passed the fort which had been pointed out to him by his companion, and which lay close to the path he was pursuing, he started, shivered with an emotion like fear, and then stamped his foot against the earth, and uttered a furious oath against his own weakness. He raised his hand over his eyes, and attempted to hurry forward, with his face turned another way, then suddenly stopping short, and meditating for a moment, he set his teeth hard, and said: "It was an ugly deed after all. The old dark man that couldn't defend himself, nor know what was coming upon him. It was a coward's blow that drew his blood" This was spoken something like the manner of self condemnation which a sportsman might be supposed to feel, who had

shot a hare sleeping in its form. "He was kind to me too when I wanted kindness badly enough. But," (fiercely)—"what hurt? He blotted all from my mind, when he took from me the only friend I had." Then, with a sudden and hurried self-recollection—"Eh? what am I doing here? Well, to be sure, see this! and the sun going down already, and all I have to do before I meet *him*. Think o' that, why!" And once more assuming an appearance of steadiness and settled energy, he rushed from the fort.

He did not long, however, retain possession of this accidental firmness. As he placed his foot on the little stile which connected the foot-path with the hill road, an old, palsied, white-headed woman, her hair gathered up in a roll under her decent white kerchief, a few sods of turf and faggots in her check apron, and a string of large horn beads in her hand, met him at the other side. Raising her aged head as if with an effort, and expanding her sunken eyes as they fell upon his figure, she stopt short, and broke in upon the litany she had been telling, to wish the stranger a "good evenen, *kindly*." Strangely moved by the contrast in the designs and occupations of both, the Coiner paused, and gazing fixedly on the old woman, returned her greeting with a degree of tenderness in his voice that arrested her attention, in turn. Perceiving that her route lay over the hedge, which was no slight obstacle for old and sapless bones like hers to surmount, and acting under the influence of one of those unaccountable sensations to which his present state of agitation rendered him liable, he stept back for the purpose of suffering the devotee to pass first over the stile.

"Goen to pay your rounds at the chapel, over, this evenen, I'll be bound, you are, now—a lanna-ma-chree?" (child of my heart)—she said, as she placed her withered and bony fingers (from which the rosary still depended) on the wall.

"Going to the chapel, indeed, a-vaneestha,"* replied the Coiner, smiling, in an access of fresh and stinging remorse, upon her.

"E' then, may all that you do there be remembered to you at the day o' judgment, in the last o' the world, an through all eternity, for uvur, av you'll only jest gi' me the hand till I'll get over this place it's so *cross*, entirely, my old bones will be broke in my body within."

Without paying any attention to, indeed almost without hearing, certainly without considering, her kindly meant benediction, the Coiner raised her in his arms with as much ease as he would have done a child, and placed her gently on the soft path at the other side; after which he continued his course, along the road.

"Millia buehus,† thin!" exclaimed the pious old creature, "and the Lord keep his eye upon you this blessed night, and hear the prayers of his holy Saint John, upon his own eve, that you may ever an' always continue in grace, and as well inclined as you are this moment, for it is a good sign o' you to help the poor old widow, and to be goen to the chapel on the Eha-na-Shawn, while many another boy oulder than yourself is at the *goal* playen, or in the publican's, this way."

So much for appearances!

The act of gentleness which he had done, once more contributed to throw Suil Dhuv upon the interrupted mood of retrospection which had been growing upon him throughout the evening. The little green spot, also, before the chapel brought many an old and peaceful remembrance to his mind. He recollected the many summer mornings when the bright Sabbath sun beheld him hastening down the wild path, his neatly frilled white linen shirt lying gracefully on his open bosom; a small, carefully tendered "Path to Paradise" in his hand; his black and shining

* Old Woman. † A thousand thanks.

curls combed into a beautiful and closely-clustered mass; his shoes, a luxury only allowed him on occasions, when a special decency of appearance was deemed requisite, glistening in the sunshine; a little bottle thrust into his side pocket, which was given him by the old woman who had dressed him up, for the purpose of having it replenished from the can of holy water at the altar's foot—in this Sunday trim he had often hurried over this very ground, his heart, in its innocence of feeling, trembling with anxiety lest he should lose the benefit of the Mass, an evil which is regarded with a peculiar fear, in Irish humble life, even among those whose principles, unhappily, are lax enough in many other respects.

He paused, to gaze upon the little turfen seat where the pastor of the rural flock was accustomed to sit in the sunshine, to talk familiarly with the cottagers on their domestic affairs, or hear the confession of a penitent. He recollected the time when he had knelt on the green sod by the side of the holy man, his heart sinking within him with fear, as he meditated the humiliating disclosures of some boyish offence, an infraction of the Sabbath, or a word spoken in anger to some playfellow, and the gentle monitory voice of his adviser seemed once more to murmur in his ear.

His thoughts naturally reverted to his present condition, and he almost unconsciously put the question to his own heart, how different and how dark, in the comparison, would be the account which he should now have to render to the same minister of peace, if he were to rise from the quiet grave, in which he had long been sleeping the sweet sleep of the blameless, and resume his ancient place on this humble tribunal. The last fancy startled him. As a celebrated divine,* with that insight into the machinery of the human heart which characterized a great portion of his writings, has said, that long habit of self-willed contempt

* Jean Baptiste Massillon.

for, and obstinate resistance to the truth of religion is often apt to substitute a mechanical superstition in its place; so it might now be observed of the stained and hardened soul that stood, with the purpose of the last of human offences, black, daring, deadly sacrilege, before the door of the temple, that the fouler and fiercer his resolution became, the more weak and nervous was his frame, and the more fearfully active his memory and his imagination. The short, quick breathings of the wind through the dry thatch made him start and tremble, while sudden forms, of he knew not what or whom, seemed to flit before and about him, through the evening g'oom. Again his memory conjured up new sights and sounds of terror from the familiar spot on which he stood. He beheld the buried clergyman, robed in the sacred vestments of his office, lifting his hands above his head, and pouring forth, as he had once done, the denunciations of the fearful judgment of the impenitent, from that awful text, the words of which had made the young blood of the Coiner curdle in its channels, when he had first heard them uttered—"I go my way, and you shall seek me, and you shall not find me, and you shall die in your sin!" The recollection of this occasion completely unhinged the courage of the unhappy wretch. He trembled violently, flung himself unconsciously on his knees—struck his breast rapidly and violently with his clenched fist—muttered a hurried snatch of the half-forgotten rosary—and yet, by some strange influence, amid all this agitation and remorse, the thought of desisting from the crime, which he meditated at that very moment, scarcely once occurred to him.

Vague and general notions of an amended life, not in any instance assuming the vigour or sincerity of a positive intention, glanced across his spirit at intervals, while he busied himself in preparing his instruments, and examined the door and windows of the building. The very security which seemed to attend his undertaking, the absence of all human obstacle, the facility which the loneliness of the

place itself presented the slight resistance which the door seemed likely to oppose to his entrance, all furnished him with matter for new distrust He paused before the building with that feeling of fearful suspicion which chills the heart of the bravest soldier, when he finds a position totally silent and undefended where he expected to meet with an opposition worthy of its importance.

The sullen dash of the waters behind him began to boom upon his hearing, like the sound of distant thunder He struck fiercely at the lock of the door, then started and trembled as the many echoes of the blow came back upon him from the rents and hollows of the cliff and glyn, and again repeated the strokes with double vehemence. At length, flinging the hammer away, he stept a few paces back, then dashing himself furiously against it, he sent it crashing round upon its hinges.

We dare not follow the sacrilegious wretch through all the detail of his impieties in the interior of the building. The whole proceeding, from this moment, was one of such absolute delirium, that he could hardly be said to have acted it with consciousness. He rushed to the recess in which the object of his search—the silver chalice or ciboreum was kept, forced it open, flung himself on his knees once more, clasped his hands, prostrated himself on the earth, started to his feet, snatched the sacred vessel, dashed *the contents*, the sight of which almost maddened him, upon the altar—and fled in an abandonment of utter fear along the aisle, panting heavily, crossing himself, and striking his breast, and muttering prayers and curses blended—while his sight swam and wandered wildly over the place, his ears seemed to ring with the din of mingled thunders, hymns and laughter; flakes of whitish light darted with throbs of anguish from his eyeballs; the air about him grew hot and suffocating; the darkening vault of the night seemed to press with a horrid weight upon his brain; and his conscience, rising like a buried giant, from

beneath the mountains of crime he had cast upon it, revealed, and almost realized the Pandemonium which his slighted, though unforgotten faith had pointed out to him, with a warning finger in his days of early innocence.

CHAPTER X.

Coobo. Pray you, sir, stand up, I am sure you are not Lancelot, my boy.

Lancelot. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Lancelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.—*Shakespeare.*

THE same red sun which had lighted the old Palatine and his party on their road by the Corrig-on-Dhiol, beheld the Coiner's accomplice, Mun Maher, pacing impatiently up and down the road near the *fort*, the *sugan collar** of his own, and the bridle of his leader's horse, both resting on his arm, while he busied himself in keeping peace between the animals, a question having arisen as to the right of property in the nutritious succedaneum which encircled the head of Mun Maher's charger, and which, in the opinion of the better-appointed steed, was capable of being appropriated to a more gratifying purpose than that of a mere symbol of subserviency.

Mun Maher would have been much the fitter person (for the purposes of the gang) to have sent on the enterprise which the Suil Dhuv had undertaken. He was one of those happy characters who are relieved by Nature from the evil of either thinking or feeling deeply on any subject, and whose vice or virtue is the result altogether of accident and habit; who take whatever little ideas they may possess altogether upon trust, and live, as one† of the most independent

* A rude kind of bridle, or halter, made of hay

† Locke.

of the tribe of independent thinkers bitterly expresses it—"upon the alm's basket—on scraps of begged opinions."

Maher's tone of mind or feeling, in consequence, was always formed by the company into which circumstances had thrown him last. He was ferocious after he had conversed for an hour with Red Rody—spirited, fiery, and ambitious while in the presence of Suil Dhuv—given to *crusheening** when he and Jerry got into a corner together—and he never left the room where Maney O'Neil sat, without a passion for roguery and low cheating.

Neither was this cameleon-like quality of imitation confined to the moral composition of the man. He generally assumed, with the tone of mind imparted by those into whose society he was thrown, the gesture, the voice, and even the very air of the features. By a singular flexibility of countenance, similar to that which, even in these days of the Drama's disgrace, enables a Mathews to collect around his green cloth and lamps, a laughing circle of her once-generous patrons from the world of the Exclusives themselves—by such a capability was Mun Maher enabled, even without the intention or consciousness of it, to adopt his face and manner entirely to those of his companions—changing occasionally from Jerry's soft, open gaze, to the hard-knit brow and fixed stare of Suil Dhuv—the stupid, foolish eye of Maney, and even, occasionally, to adopt the palsied agitation of Rody himself. He was certain, moreover, to remain in the condition of mind in which he had been last placed, until some new archetype was presented to him, for (like the bird of the American forests, that is songless in itself, yet can become the pupil or even the rival of the nightingale), he might be said to have no positive or original existence of his own, but to present at all times the *double* of some neighbour or acquaintance, playing the same part in the world which a loser plays at a game of

* Gossipping

forfeits, who is condemned to receive and retain an attitude from each of the company in turn.

The same feeling, moreover, which would render such a one impatient at being left for any considerable time in the same position, made Mun fret and chafe at a great rate whenever he was left long alone. He remained, for some time after Suil Dhuv left him, with his arms folded and his eyes fixed musingly through his gathered brows upon the ground, then led his horses slowly up and down, wondered at the long delay made by his companion (a considerable time before the latter had reached his destination). and at last, taking from his coat pocket a bundle of smoke-stained, whited-brown papers stitched together in the form of a book, in which the print, composed of a strange jumble of types of all shapes and sizes, was scarcely discernible in the gloom (a species of confusion of which our London readers may be enabled to form some idea by walking as far as the dead-wall in Oxford-street, or any other dead-wall where those elegant specimens of typography from "Pitt's and Son, at the Seven Dials," flutter on their pack-thread in the dusty street gale, and where, with reverence be it spoken, in the friendless hours of our literary noviciate in the great Babel, we were wont to charm away the remembrance of many a cold repulse and many a stinging disappointment), taking, we repeat (craving the reader's indulgence for our long parenthesis) taking such a book from his coat pocket, and turning over a few of the well-fingered and dog's-eared pages, he selected, from a number of ballads, one which their habits had rendered very popular among the gang, and which he adapted to that exquisitely passionate air which our tuneful fellow-countryman, Moore, has since graced with no less exquisitely passionate words. The reader, however, is requested to keep those out of his recollection while he follows Mun through *The Lamentation of Ellen Maguare, or the Angler's deceit*—

"Phoo! what is it at all for one song? Eh?—No—

The Red-haired Man's Wife—the *Colleen Rue*—the——Hah! you animal, you—will you be quiet, there—Is it to ait me horse's collar *upon* her you mane, this evening? You're like your own master, you tyrant, wanten to have uvury thing to yourself—*John M'Goulderick's trial for the Quaker's daughter*—and that's a moven song too, and a dale o' tenderness and fine English in it. How is this it goes?—hum!.....

'My name is John M'Goulderick,
I never will deny—
They swore I was a Ribbonman
Condemned I was to die—
As soon as my dead letter came
My sorrows did renew—
Sayen, for to die
I do deny—
Brave boys, what shall I do?

There's a hole in the ballad—I'm not able for that at all, to-night.—You won't let that sugan alone, again? Sheela-na-Guira—A'then, joy be with you in a bottle o' moss, Mary, wherever you are this evenen, 'twas you that used to turn that nate:—

'I, trembling, approached this beautiful dame—
And in great confusion I asked her name—
Was she Flora?
Aurora?
Or great Queen Demira?
Says she, I am neither—I'm Sheela-na-Guira.'

Well, pass to the next—that's too moven; it puts me in mind of ould times and things, intirely—Oh, here it is at last—'As I went—' Yes—oy—that's it—"(and clearing his voice by a "hem" which made the neighbouring valleys ring, he commenced the *Lamentation* in a truly lamentable key, dwelling with a due degree of tremulous vehemence upon the semibreves, and prolonging the key-note from the ferocious, ear-piercing loudness of a trumpet, to the buzzing indistinctness of the echo of an echo's echo).

I.

As I went a walken one mornen in June
To view those gay flowers whin spreaden in bloom,
I spied a young faymale quite handsome and fair,
She had me enamoured—young Ellen Maguare.

II

She far exceeds Phœbus—Luno, the moon.—
Her breath is far sweeter than roses in June—
I have travelled this nation—I vow and declare,
But I never could aiquil young Ellen Maguare

III.

At length I stept to her, and this I did say—
Your modest appearance has led me astray—
Both you and blind Cupid has me in a snare,
I hope you'll rilase me young Ellen Maguare.

IV.

With this modest answer, then. she told her mind
'If I could rilase you, I'd be well inclined—
My heart is entangled, af you're in a snare—
So that is your answer from Ellen Maguare.'

Gondoutha, wisha! And he murdered her after all the love—oy, indeed—

V.

Now I'll conclude and let you understand
May this be a warning to every young man.
To the lapboard of Sligo I straight must repair—
And die for the murder of Ellen ———"

"Maguare," he would have said—or sung—had not the quatrain been cut short in a manner which seemed almost to threaten the vocalist with a fate similar to that of the unhappy heroine of his monody. This was neither more nor less than a well-aimed blow, which took him on the middle of the crown and laid him sprawling, book and all, upon his face and hands in the very centre of the high road.

A thousand vague suspicions and surmises identified with the peculiar superstitions of the night—the power of the secret ministers of evil—the dark and sudden *pooca*—the

wanton *Sheevrie*—the *sowlth* (bodiless spirit), or the *dhina-mauha*—(*good people*) as mischievously inclined, notwithstanding the conciliatory appellation which is given them, as any among the host of malicious spirits who are supposed to make holi*day* on those sacred vigils—and be gifted with a power almost unlimited over all who, unprotected by the shield of a secure conscience, are found wandering at sunset in lonely places—a thousand surmises of this nature flashed in indistinct and hurrying masses upon the mind of the prostrate Maher, and, for a time, prevented him from lifting up his eyes, as he would very speedily have done under any other circumstances, to ascertain from what cause or with whom the aggression originated. His doubts on this subject, however, were solved by the sound of a shrill voice, the tones of which, though not heard during the lapse of many a long day before, were most familiar to his ear:—

"*Millia buehus—ayus millia gloria!* you contrairy boy! have I found you at last? get up wit you, an coom along home wit me this minnit, I tell you, agin!"

Mun raised his eyes cautiously, and beheld, standing above him, with the fragment of an ashen bough in her hand, and the rosary transferred from that hand to her neck, the old woman to whom Suil Dhuv had been so civil when he met her in the glyn.

"Aih, mother, is that you that's there?"

"D'ye hear him for one rogue? 'Tis thin, I that's there—get up an coom along wit me, now. Ah, you ingrateful rebel—you that I rared and cared for, and that I thought would be spreaden a bed in heaven for your old mother, yit—to go after seeh coorses as them! Whose horses are them you're houlden?"

"My own, and the Suil Dhuv."

"The Suil Dhuv!" the old woman exclaimed, dropping the bough, and clasping and wreathing her bony fingers in strong terror. "Oh, Mun, a boughleen dhown! is that the company you're keepen now, darlen?"

"What else would I be doen?"

"Stayen at home, to be sure, minden the ould widowed mother, you thief o' the world—look! look over! Do you see that fort beyont, with the black hazels stirren upon the edges of it? and do you know what was done there? Eh—the gentle Heaven preserve us, may be 'tis to one o' themselves I'd be talken, this way! Answer me, eroo, wor you one o' them that did that deed, in that place, that night?" and the old woman moved back from him with some distrust.

"Ax me no questions, mother." said Mun, enjoying, for a moment, even the unenviable kind of superiority which the horrible suspicion of his worthy parent gave him—and affecting a degree of gloomy and mystical importance—"ax me no questions—an' I'll tell you no stories. There are some people in the world that are obliged, sometimes, to do things that other people arn't to know anythen about. Do you think," he added, bending on her one of his leader's dark glances—"do you think you are able to judge that deed, whether it was good or bad? did you ever hear tell of the bunch of *loghero?*" [rushes.]

"The bunch o' loghero! eroo—" said the old widow, quite bewildered—

"Coom, sit down a-near me here on the ditch—an' I'll tell you it while the Suil Dhuv is away. *Siedh shus!** here. The moryil of it is that you arn't to say anythen is wrong whin you jedge be yourself, and can't for the life o' you see the inward meaning o' what's done. Listen to me.†

"A holy and a good man, but too much troubled with doubts, Father Dennis, was awoke in the midd'e of a dark December night by a great noise outside his window. He got up, threw open the shutters, and looking out, he saw

* Sit down.

† The moral of this fable bears so obvious a resemblance to that of Parnell's *Hermit*, that it does not seem extravagant to suppose (the poet's acquaintance with faery lore taken into consideration) that it suggested the design of that fine performance.

two men, one of them striving to kill the other with a hatchet, and the other endeavouring to save himself as well as he could. Just as the Priest was going to cry out a thousand murders, he heard a heavy crash, and a groan, and then a great fall, and then there was a silence, so he knew all was over.

"He held his tongue, and waited to see what would become of the murderer. 'I shall now know to a certainty,' said the Priest, 'whether there is a Providence or no.'

"Opposite to the Priest's house was a sweet cottage tenanted by a young couple who had been married only a few months, and were the admiration of the whole village for their fondness. To this house he saw the murderer drag the body—he laid it near the cottage door, and placing the bloody hatchet on his breast, he went his ways.

"The Priest never returned to his bed that night, but stood at the window waiting for daylight, to see what would become of the murdered and the murderer. 'If there be a Providence,' says the Priest, 'the murderer surely shall not be suffered to escape.'

"Day broke—there was very little light—scarce so much as might serve to guide a man upon his road; for the moon and stars had gone down, and it was long—long before sunrise. He saw the cottage door open—and the man of the house—a young, hale, handsome man came out. He stumbled over the dead body, and fell;—not knowing the cause, he was greatly surprised on rising, to find himself dabbled with blood. He startled and trembled from head to foot—stooped and touched the corpse, taking the hatchet in his hand, and after making certain that the man was dead indeed, he ran towards the high road, scarcely knowing what he was about to do. At the gate he was met and hailed by a neighbour.

"'Ho! you're early rising this morning, sir,' said the strange man—'where to, now?'

"'I'm going—I don't know—I want help—there's murder has been done.'

"'By whom? Not by you I hope—what brings the blood upon your vest and face—and what business have you (Lord save us!) with the bloody hatchet in your hands. Show me the body. What? at your own door too? In the name of the great Lord, and of the king of the land, I take you a prisoner for this deed.'

"'Surely,' says the Priest, 'if there be a Providence this innocent man won't suffer for the deed he never shared in.' The young man was sent to gaol, and the priest staid all that day praying in his own room, that if there was a Providence, it might be made known to him in that business.

"The next morning he was roused from his knees by a wild shrieking and clapping of hands in the street. He went again to the window, and he saw a young woman, fair and well formed, standing on the roadside, crying bitterly, wringing her hands, and now and then looking, like one that is crazed, along the road, giving a loud cry, and clapping her hands, and shaking her hair over her shoulders. Father Dennis looked along the road in the same direction, and he saw red coats, and horses prancing, and guns and swords glittering, and a crowd of people pressing round a *car*,* in which, after the whole procession came a little nearer, he saw, sitting, very pale—and looking now and then at the straw that covered the hangman near him—the young man of the cottage—his neighbour. Then the Priest started—and determined, before matters went farther, to put an end to the matter, by telling all he knew. He got up, and was about to leave his room, when he was struck senseless in a fit.

When he came to himself, he saw one through the curtain of the bed sitting by him, and watching for him to wake. Supposing that it was his clerk, he asked if the execution had passed.

* Cart.

"'It is over,' said the man; 'I saw the dead man with my own eyes.'

"'Then,' said the Priest, starting up in the bed, 'I have cast away my life in prayers that were never heard—for *there is no Providence!*'

"'Take care how you say that too speedily,' said the man, drawing back the curtain, and looking him straight in the face. It was the murderer himself.

"Father Dennis felt his heart faint away within him; but he could not speak, neither was he able to deny the man, when he walked towards the door and bade him follow. He got up, put on his old hat, took his stick and his breviary in his hand, and away with him into the fields, the murderer still going before, and now and then beckoning him on, until they came to a lonely, quiet place, where there was a bunch of *loghero* growing in the middle of the fields.

"'Do you remember,' says the murderer, 'a young man of your parish that was spirited away into these wild places and never heard of after?'

"'The man was going to be married,' says Father Dennis, 'to the same young woman that is now a widow, mourning for the innocent man that was hanged yesterday.'

"'Did you mark how he started and trembled when he felt the blood upon his hands, and saw the bloody weapon? Take this spade and dig there?'

"The Priest put the spade into the earth, and turning up some loose sods, there he saw the body of the young man they were speaking of, as fresh as ever, with a deep gash on one side of the head.

"'Take the hatchet that is on the breast,' said the murderer.

"Father Dennis took the rusty hatchet, and there, sure enough, he found cut upon the handle, the name of the man that had been hanged that morning.

"'There *is* a God then,' said a voice above his head, 'and a just and a good one.'

"Father Dennis looked around for the murderer, but he was no where to be seen, and there was no bush nor place where he could hide himself. At last, looking up, he saw, floating in the air above him, a glorious angel, with bright wings waving, and white garments flying, and a smile on his lips like the dawn of the May morning.

"'I am he that brought you here,' said the angel; 'Return to your house and believe. You can see now that your doubts were daring and guilty, and that it is not what man thinks evil that is evil in the sight of God.' So that's the way wit you, you see, because you can't see the rason why Segur should be murthered, an' he dark, you think it must be wrong done, surely. Ha! what's that—murther! murther! how he runs! O they're chasen him, surely—He's pinned, an' we'll be all hung together on a string, like onions. Go along, mother, and hide yourself—Here he is, an' they hunten him."

"Who is it, Mun, eroo? Aih, darlen?"

"No matther, mother dear, run for your life——*sunuher** to me, (though that's no great curse) if you won't be kilt av you stop a min it——"

"I'll not stir till you come along wit me now, Mun—"

"O, d'ye hear this? I'll go to you to-morrow, now—see! that I mightn't sin af I wont! I'll be at your table by the hob with the first light in the mornen, or else, may I never die in sin! That the two hands may go to the grave wit me av I don't. That the head may stick to me, now—murther! only see how he flies like a greyhound over the ditches. He'll be atop o' you in a minnit—"

"Mun, I won't lave you now I have you, for I know it's the last that talks to you it's them you'll be said by."

"O then, see this, why! What am I to do at all with

* A good wife.

you, afther all the cursen! I tell you I'll not stop more than this night wit him, and isn't that enoogh?"

The old woman's answer was cut short by the arrival of Suil Dhuv, who bounded clear over the stile behind them, and seemed about to continue his headlong flight yet farther, when Mun laid hold on his arm.

"Ha! hold off? Who takes my arm?" he cried in a convulsion of fierce terror, while his eyes, staring and dilated, wandered over the person of his accomplice (scarcely less terrified), his hair stirred upon his forehead, which was pale as marble, although bathed in perspiration. "What —Maher? Where are the horses?"

"Here! sir, what's the matter? Are they after us?"

"They are! they are! O blessed night! I'm burning!"

"Who are they?"

"All that's evil, I think! Mount and be off—Don't you see 'em, and hear 'em, and feel 'em? *I* do, if you don't—There—there!" he added, dashing the chalice at Maher's feet, while the latter started back—"there's what they're all of 'em screeching after, and what I brought throught the midst of 'em all—take it, you, and bring it along."

The old woman, at sight of the sacred cup, clasped her hands and uttered a scream of horror. Suil Dhuv looked upon, and instantly recognised her. At the same instant too, the recollection of her intended benediction, to which he had paid no attention at the moment when it was spoken, and which seemed to have been preserved hitherto in the mere avenues of the sense, now forced its way with all its original distinctness into the understanding, and froze him with horror. "*May all that you do there be remembered to you at the day o' judyment, in the last o' the world, and through all eternity for ever!*" The solemnity of the anathema, the more fearful as it was most innocently meant by the speaker, and seemed to be altogether the voice of Providence unconsciously transmitted to her, pealed with a

stunning influence upon his heart and brain. That very innocency of intention, moreover, served only to increase his rage against the poor woman. He rushed furiously upon her, and would, most probably, have shook the unfortunate creature's bones "out of her garments," in spite of the vigorous resistance which was made by Maher, had not a new subject of alarm suddenly struck his sight. He relaxed his hands, which were clenched hard upon the throat of his accomplice, and remained for a moment silent, and staring fixedly over his shoulder, on the distant hills.

"Light he's getten, surely," said Mun.

"A judgment from Heaven!" exclaimed his mother.

The Coiner continued gazing on the distance, and muttering, between his teeth—"Ay now—there 'tis—it's really coming now through—Look, look at all the fires breaking through the earth—Look!—Look—!"

Mun turned, and beheld indeed a sight which showed him there was some ground for the wild words of the Coiner. The mountains and the plains on all sides around them were lighted up with numberless fires—the red lustre of which, during the space of time consumed by their conversation, had supplanted that of the heavy evening sun.

"'Tis the Eha-na-Shawn, sure," says the old woman.

"Is it St. John's fires you'd be wondheren at, that way?" asked Maher.

Snil Dhuv paused a moment, breathed heavily, then sprung into the air, stamped both feet against the ground, and shaking back his hair that was damp with perspiration, he snatched the reins of his horse and was mounted in an instant.

Maher was about to follow his example, when his mother bent forward and laid her hand entreatingly upon his arm. "Mun, Mun darlen? O Mun, a lanna ma chree!"

"To-morrow, mother—to-morrow mornen I'll be in my father's house agin, but I must be good to my word to-night. Take care o' the chalice, for I wouldn't touch it"

said Maher, as he rode after his leader, the tramping of whose horse's hoofs were already heard in the distance.

"Heaven speed that morrow, then!" exclaimed the old woman, clasping her hands once more, and turning up her old eyes in fervent prayer—"Heaven keep my child out of sin and blood this dreadful night! Aih! see where they left the chalice, the two of 'em." And plucking some dock-leaves, which she reverently wrapped about the sacred vessel, taking care not to pollute the consecrated silver by her touch (an impiety from which it needed not the remembrance of the fate of Oza to warn her)—she carried it between her hands, with many a genuflection, and many a sigh, and many an "Allilu! O hone! mavrone!" to her own humble dwelling.

CHAPTER XI.

Thou hast left me, ever, Jamie—thou hast left me ever.
Thou hast left me, ever, Jamie—thou hast left me ever.
Aften hast thou vowed that death only should us sever—
Now thou'st left thy lass for aye—I maun see thee never!
Jamie!
I'll see thee never!—*Burns.*

THE reader may possibly remember some allusions made in the early part of this narrative to a fair friend of Robert Kumba, whose name has afterwards frequently occurred under circumstances which it was intended should be interesting, although the original construction of the history has rendered it difficult for us to introduce the lady personally to his notice before the present moment. The story of her love and her disappointment is so brief, and at the same time (owing to peculiar circumstances in her disposition and education) so unfrequent, that we are sure of obtaining his indulgence if we venture to arrest, even in the zenith of

its middle bound, the main action of the story, for the purpose of claiming for one, whose happiness or misery is most closely entangled in its results, that portion of his attention which she deserves, and which, we can assure him, she would be very unwilling to solicit for herself.

A clear, open forehead, beautifully rounded off beneath a cluster of that dark [*not* black] and shining hair, which is so general as to be almost characteristic among Munster maidens, and which parting easily in the centre of the forehead, formed a darkening semicircle on the pure marble of the slightly hollowed temples, and fell in waving curls upon the shoulders—a fashion which was then very popular among those younger members of the gentle sex, whose years had not yet entitled them to the womanly honours of a *tête*—a masque of a full, yet delicate and tapering outline —and a chin sharp, sweet, and small as those which the great father of the English school of portrait painting seemed to look upon as the cestus of female, or at least of infantine beauty—dimpling to every smile, and scarcely inferior in expressive sweetness to the exquisitely curved and "wee bit" lips above it—a cheek which combined the mossy tenderness of the rose bud, with the delicately vigorous hue of its expanded petals—a nose (it is an awkward feature to introduce into a mere description—but if ever there was a rose that looked well in prose or poetry, that nose was Lilly Byrne's) a nose then, we say fearlessly, which would have safely braved even the critical eye of that renowned Italian magnate* whose perception was so acute that he could observe a fault which in reality did not exist, and an improvement where in reality none had taken place, a fine well-opened eye, over which the long quivering lashes played with an influence which at the same time tempered and heightened the fiery sweetness of the light-blue sparklers beneath them; teeth,

* The reader needs not to be reminded of the well-known anecdote of Angelo and his patron.

convex, close set, and pearly; a neck and gorge which, as the curiously fanciful writer of Arcadia might have expressed it, formed the most delightful isthmus that could be wished or, between that lovely peninsula, her head, and that most fair continent, her person—and which presented the most exquisite model that even *he* could desire, of that exquisitely delicate sharpness of outline which characterises the most lady-like of Laurence's portraits; which is no less characteristic of real elegance and gentle descent in the sex of Lilly Byrne, than the curling hair and aquiline nose is in the other, and which, moreover, seems to depend on such a hair-breadth nicety of touch, that nothing less than absolute instinct or accident in the painter can enable him to accomplish it—round, yet narrow shoulders, which were connected by a fine conchoid with the slope of the neck, and from which the arms fell into a position of infinite ease and concord, confined by the closely fitted sleeve of the gown (as was the fashion of the time) as low down as the elbow, where the silk was cut out from the hollow of the arm, leaving a graceful lap over the softly rounded flexure, and suffering the remainder of the limb to continue revealed, in all its tapering softness—its elegant diminutiveness of wrist, its daintiness of finger, and polished convexity of nail (there is nothing like being particular), to the admiration of the beholder, unless, perhaps, on certain occasions when its beauties were "covered, but not hid," by the mist-like shadowing of a half-handed silk net glove; a waist squeezed up into a cruelly delightful littleness, such as would have satisfied the charming Lady Mary Montague* herself—confined within a peaked body, which was on state occasions ornamented with a stomacher of small brilliants, and for the most part with the narrow ribbon work of the stays, which were left exposed by the opening of the gown in front, that sloped upward and revealed just so much of

* Vide one of her letters from Austria.

the white neck as was consistent with the feminine modesty of the period—and that was very little indeed (we don't mean the modesty, but the neck)—for

> Y que pues Hidalgas son,
> No solo no nos den pechos,
> Pero ni pechos, ni espaldas;

was a prohibition more in favour with our fair Hibernian ancestors than among the heroines of *Las Armas de la Hermosura;* or we will dare to say, the young and beautiful of our own day: a small foot, confined within a sharp-pointed, high-heeled satin shoe, ornamented with rows of gold or silver spangles, and glancing from beneath the richly quilted green silk petticoat (to use an adaptation of Sir John Suckling's celebrated simile), like little gold-finches, fluttering among the summer foliage of a sycamore; an ankle, the glossy whiteness of which was qualified, not concealed, by the thin, faint flesh-coloured checked silk stocking, and which formed the most perfectly finished termination in the world to the classically large and easily fashioned person: these constituted the claims of Lilly Byrne to the title which was given her of the village beauty, and if, after all the pains we have been at in detailing them, the reader should refuse to have those claims allowed, we can only say that we wish him a better taste.

But the portrait which we have just presented was that which a painter might have taken with advantage, when Lilly Byrne was younger and happier than she was on this day; when the hope of authorised affection lived in her heart, and breathed in every movement of her frame; when she loitered and listened with a cheek alternately flushing and whitening with the gentle tumultuousness of expectation for the approach of her accepted lover, mistaking the creaking of the iron yard-gate for his pattering summons upon the brazen rapper of the hall-door, nibbling her pretty lip in anger at the disappointment, glancing

towards the window, and along the elevated lawn by which he was to approach, fidgetting and quarreling with her work, talking of everything but *the* subject, and blushing even to her fingers' ends, when she found herself detected in the midst of her manœuvres by the experienced eye of her mother, or the sudden, loud laugh of her father, as their glances met—when the day was consumed between the lovers in those unmeaning words and actions, which, between lovers, have so deep a meaning—in jests which were laughed at, and not worth being laughed at, and those tantalizing annoyances, by which even the most sincere and the fondest among the gentle tyrants of the hours of courtship delight in manifesting their power over the great awkward fool who is lying at their feet—a power, indeed, which, considering how very short-lived it is in general, it would be an act of naughty supererogation to take from them; when light heart and merry word was the order of the day, when Lilly Byrne could do nothing for Robert Kumba, who was hiding her balls of cotton and her bobbin, and pulling the thread out of her needle, and Robert protested it was Lilly herself that was so idle, and mama remonstrated, and wished that Mr. Robert Kumba would mind his own business, so she did, and let her daughter mind hers, and Robert said Lilly was a spiteful little tell-tale, and the old gentleman said they were all a parcel of fools together, and —but if we say more, we shall come in for a share of the censure.

Few love-matches commencing under such circumstances, so blameless and so seemingly prosperous, were ever so suddenly deranged and overclouded as this was.

The affair proceeded far beyond that limit within which the *prospects*, at least, if not the feelings of a girl may be said to remain secure. Those little privileges of address, which are not even allowed to the accepted lover, until all is believed to be as certain of accomplishment as if the ceremony had already passed, and which perhaps it were well for

the peace and happiness of many a forsaken heart to have altogether prohibited, until the very possibility of a disappointment had been removed, had been long accorded to Robert Kumba. The envied and (what was more) enviable position by her side on all occasions—the solitary evening walk—the tête-à tête in crowds—the certainty that he imparted pleasure while he whispered welcome nonsense in

"The soft labyrinth of a lady's ear,"

and a thousand other harmless intimacies which the memory of those who have been, the consciousness of those who are, and the imagination of those who wish to be, lovers, will save us the pains of recounting—were, for a long time, freely granted him; and the consequence was, that he had at length become completely wound up and entangled with all the joys, the sorrows, the hopes, and the fears of the young and ardent girl, that it should be as reasonable to look for the survival of her happines after he, its heart, had been snatched from her, as to suppose that her material frame should continue uninjured in any of its functions after the great organ of life had been torn from her bosom. She died this moral death, however; for her lover *was* snatched from her—and so suddenly, that the ruin reached her spirit even before a single fear could prepare her for its approach. The manner of the "break off" was so strange and rapid —so utterly unlooked for—so startling and dream-like, that all was past and gone before she could even imagine the possibility of her desolation.

The lovers had been taking their usual evening walk, and were occupying their usual position on the strait-backed strait-armed, chintz-covered sofa (or settee, as it was then called), Lilly complaining pettishly of fatigue, while her lover untied the strings of her gypsy-fashioned white chip hat, and laid aside her scarf—while Mrs. Byrne sat knitting a grey worsted stocking by the clear turf fire, and a clean, sleek tortoise-shell cat sat on her knee, in that beau-

tiful position for which it is almost proverbially celebrated, purring its monotonous song of pleasure and contentment —and while Mr. Byrne, who had manifested a degree of reserve in his manner to Kumba throughout the evening, which was attributed by the latter to the accident of some disappointment in his farming affairs, continued walking slowly back and forward from the corner near the cupboard to the corner near the window, jingling a handful of half-pence behind his back, and humming the popular air, the burthen of which runs :

Dholinshin cruiskeen, lawn, lawn, lawn,
Dholinshin cruiskeen, lawn,
Dholinshin cruiskeen
Slauntha gal ma vourneen
*Bohumilum a cooleen dhuv no bawn.**

On a sudden the old gentlemen stopped short, and said,

"Robert Kumba, who were those people I saw on the grounds, over, to-day ?"

Kumba let Lilly's hand go, and reddened slightly, with the angry consciousness of one who conceives that a "liberty" is about to be taken with him.

"They were—poh !—they were fellows from Mr. Rose, sir."

"I thought so. Where are the little *vaugh* of black cattle that you were so proud of, that you had in the east meadow a week ago, Robert ?"

"O then, sir, I'm sure I don't know—they're gone, Sir," said Kumba, in increased displeasure.

"Sold ?"

"Poh—yes—" with an impatient laugh.

* "With this little vessel full, full, full,!
With this little vessel full,
With this little vessel—
Here's a white health, my little dear,
I don't care whether your hair is black or fair"

Is not this in the spirit of Sheridan's "Let the toast pass," &c.

"By you Robert?"

"By the driver, sir."

"I am sorry to hear it—they were a great loss."

"O, I'm sure I don't want any body to tell me that. They wouldn't go if I could help it."

"Don't speak so impatiently, Robert, to your friends. 'Tis in kindness I speak, believe me. Your uncle James says that you *could* have helped it."

"My uncle James," said Kumba, vehemently, "never interferes in my business from any kind or generous motive. I wish he would spare his censures, since he can afford nothing else."

"I don't know but a timely censure may be a very good thing," said Mr. Byrne, in a fair and easy way; "and I should like to hear you show that this was undeserved before you get into a passion about it."

"O, well, there has been enough about it now," said Kumba, turning to Lilly, whose agony during this scene may be well imagined—"Come, Lilly, will you play a game of chess?"

"Indeed, sir, there has not been enough about it," replied the father; "and I am determined to have a great deal more about it before *Miss Byrne* either plays chess or plays the fool."

"*Miss* Byrne!" Kumba could not help echoing unconsciously, in a murmur of perfect astonishment.

"I give myself great blame," continued the old gentleman, his warmth gradually increasing as the subject became more fully developed, "that I did not take care to make myself aware much sooner of all the circumstances that I have heard to-day. Lilly, go to your room."

"Whatever you may have to say to me, sir," said Kumba, taking Lilly's hand, which trembled in his, and smiling, though with a quivering lip, upon her—"may be said in *Miss Byrne's* presence. Our interests are single."

"Not yet, thank heaven!—Do you hear me, madam?"

Lilly, who knew the extremities of anger which her father was capable of indulging, looked entreatingly towards her mother.

"Perhaps you were misinformed, my dear," interposed Mrs. Byrne, gently.

"I *was* misinformed, my dear," said her husband, passionately; "I *was* misinformed when I took a spendthrift and a prodigal into my house—a wasteful, extravagant wretch—(don't stop me, woman!)—that is sitting there now with his mouth open looking at me, after having squandered the beautiful property that was left him not four years since, and plunged himself over head and ears in debt, while I thought he was clearing off those left by his father."

Mrs. Byrne uttered an exclamation of surprise and dismay, and poor Lilly's heart sunk as low as if the whole world were forsaking her.

"You were much mistaken, sir, if you supposed that it was ever my wish or intention to avail myself of your ignorance on that head," said Kumba, *spiritedly*.

"I wish I had known that sooner," retorted the father.

"O, 'tis never too late for repentance, sir," said Kumba, springing quickly from the sofa. "I permit no intermeddling in my affairs."

"Young man!....." Mr. Byrne exclaimed—his aged brow flushing, and his frame trembling with anger—"but no—pish! no—" checking his anger by a violent effort—"this is not altogether my affair. Hear me, sir. You shall not enter these doors again for six months. If during that time you——"

"O, my good sir, you deceive yourself very egregiously," said Kumba, with all the pride of voice and manner which he was capable of assuming—"my course, my conduct, my fortunes, and my misfortunes are my own. You cannot point my way, sir Undeceive yourself, if you please."

"Very well said sir," replied the old gentleman, smiling

and bowing—"you are your own master, and a fine scholar you have, sir. But suppose I said your way lay there, sir?" pointing to the door.

"I could find it without giving you the trouble, sir," said Kumba.

"The sooner the better then, sir," the father continued, smiling and bowing him out affectedly.

"As soon as I get my hat," said the other, snatching it at the same moment, with a degree of levity which, though in accordance with all his character, the poor stupified Lilly could not help feeling was unkind almost to heartlessness, and muttering, as he returned her father's ironical smiles, something about "the old man's *prudence*," and his own "misfortunes."

"Quit my house, ruffian!" and the old man now broke forth in a paroxysm of fury, while his wife and daughter flung themselves with cries of terror about his neck—"quit my house, ungrateful scoundrel that you are, or I'll fling you out of the window."

Kumba, perceiving at once all the impropriety of his conduct, used an action which seemed as though he wished to say something in extenuation, when he was prevented by Lilly, whose displeasure (for she *could* be displeased on occasion as well as another) had been strongly roused by the last insult to her parent.

"Begone, sir!" she exclaimed, drawing up her head, with a tone and look of virtuous anger, before which Kumba's own pride crumbled into dust—"I did not know you until now. We want neither you presence nor your apology. *You* have deceived yourself, sir, if you suppose that any interest you may possess in my affections can make me insensible to the duty I owe my father. How dared you, sir," she continued, panting with agitation—"how could you use such coarse terms to my father—and in my presence? Go, sir, your apology can do little!"

In a few seconds the hall-door had closed on the rejected

Kumba, while the old man gathered his daughter to his bosom with murmured praises and kisses of affectionate admiration. This access of tenderness, however, was the most injudicious course that could have been used in the present condition of our little heroine's feelings. It softened and let down the strings of her generous nature, and unhinged the proud consciousness of injury by which she had been sustained. She sunk from between his arms in a fit of convulsive grief, succeeded by fainting and renewed hysterics, which it required all the usual expedients of ether, burnt feathers, and cold affusions to subdue.

For many days after this occurrence had taken place, Lilly could not persuade herself that all was in reality at an end between her and her lover, and that the scene which she had witnessed was other than a dream. All passed so suddenly, so swiftly, so unexpectedly! she could not believe that the beautiful and glittering fabric which her young and sanguine heart had constructed with so much pains and self-gratulation, should thus, at the very point of its completion, be utterly hurried from her view, passing as rapidly as the rushing of a summer wind, and leaving no trace of its existence more evident than the dreary sound of its departing glory. She still listened while at her work for the knock of her lover—suffering under an agony, in which all the fever of protracted expectation was combined with the sullen and barren stillness of despair. Every approaching footstep startled her with a sudden hope, which was awakened only to be again struck lifeless by the pang of a disappointment quite as sudden. Her parents no longer received from her that devoted attention which in the security of her youthful affection she had been accustomed to pay them. When she knelt before them and bent her head to receive the parental benediction at morning and evening, the once sweetly murmured "Blessing, father; mother, blessing!" was hurried over almost unconsciously; and the affectionate prayer of the old couple, that "God would bless her, and

mark her to grace!" fell with the influence of an unmeaning sound upon her ear. Her more secret devotions, too, were distracted and unsatisfactory. When she detected herself in the midst of a train of wandering reflections, it was in vain that she reproached herself, knelt more erect, clasped her hands more firmly, and attempted by gazing steadily upward to raise her thoughts above her own worldly interests, and still the unsettled throbbing of her heart, by striving to lay all its feelings at repose in the lap of a pious confidence. The form of Robert Kumba, with his angry, rude, and selfishly passionate look, would come floating on the eye of her memory, through the upper air, and then every word and action, no sound or gesture omitted, of the scene which had taken place would steal silently through her brain, her heart would swell and throb with a new tumult, to be followed by a new self-recollection, a new effort at resignation, and again a new distraction and a new distress. Her little domestic arrangements, also, were conducted with less care and diligence than formerly. The tortoise cat (before mentioned) had holiday times in the pantry, the door of which, notwithstanding all Mrs. Byrne's agonized remonstrances, was repeatedly left ajar, and the good lady was once heard solemnly to affirm, that she had found the animal actually lapping the milk at one side of the *peck* or *keeler** while Lilly was skimming at the other. The *full-bound* [firkin] of butter, home-made, which formed one of Lilly's own housekeeping perquisites, remained unfilled, although the fair of Cork was fast approaching, and uncle Cuthbert, the grazier, had repeatedly offered to dispose of it along with his own, which was always first quality, because the butter taster was a particular friend of his; a series of advantages, the possibility of

* Probably derived from the old English *Keel*, to cool—as in Shakspeare:—

"While greasy John doth *keel* the pot."

losing which made poor Mrs. Byrne's heart ache with apprehension.

Her daughter, however, continued to neglect the fair of Cork—her fine uncle—the full-bound—the tortoise-cat and the pantry-door, in spite of all her lectures. Her fits of abstraction and absent acts and words continued to grow and fasten the more upon her manner in proportion as they were observed, and her melancholy, which at no time presented violent symptoms, was silently wearing a channel in her heart, which deepened so rapidly, as, at length, to endanger the foundation of her health itself. "Dry sorrow baked her blood." She would frequently gaze for a long hour together upon the sunny lawn before the windows of the house, with a fixed and tearless eye, absorbed in a fit of intense abstraction—from which, if roused by her mother after many unheeded calls, she would start (like one who had been surprised into slumber,) with a thousand hurried apologies; if by her father, with a sharp and peevish shortness of reply, which was most foreign to her character, and which made the old man's heart bleed.

She never wept; but very frequently, when passing to her room at night, she would pause in the middle of the long and narrow flagged hall—the candle elevated in one hand, while the other gathered her thin night-dress about her bosom—and remain motionless as a statue, her eyes rivetted on the ground, her lips parted as if in astonishment, and her whole being apparently suspended, for several minutes, until at length the conviction of her desolation came back upon her, and biting her nether lip, while she uttered a low, tremulous, and murmuring scream of anguish, she would rush along the passage to her own apartment, and fling herself on the bed in a passion of tearless grief, which wasted itself in short sobs, shiverings, and muttered sounds of suffering.

Mrs. Byrne could not "tell what to make" of all this. She could not form a conception of any ill affection of the

frame which was unconnected with a positive disease—and though grief might possibly affect a young girl a little in the manner of Lilly's complaint, it could not possibly *be* grief, for Lilly cried a great deal less than she did herself. Her father seemed by his silence to understand the matter better—but, as he saw no remedy, he did not think there was any use in contesting the point—and held his peace therefore, when Mrs. Byrne, arguing from the hot and dry skin of the patient, pronounced a sentence of typhus fever (the plague of Ireland). Strange to say, nevertheless, although Mrs. Byrne was wrong in her premises, she was right in her conclusion, and her diagnostic was confirmed by the physician of the neighbouring village.

The old man was now really terrified. He loved—he doated on his daughter, and the actual conviction of her danger burst upon him with the influence of a sudden and deep misfortune. He would have given the whole farm, live stock and all, to hear that the doctor was wrong (and "sure" that would be no such miracle neither); but the doctor in this instance was right—a typhus fever he pronounced the complaint, and a typhus fever poor Lilly had—a fever that wasted and sapped her brain, and brought her to the very gates of freedom. As the illness proceeded, and the doctor's face lengthened in sympathy with his bill, the old man's agony became absolutely phrenetic—he usurped the mother's place and the mother's offices by the bedside of the sufferer—mixed the saline draughts, administered the medicine with his own hands, and spent long nights in sleepless anxiety by her couch.

"I'll tell you what 'll come of it," the servants said to one another in the kitchen, "the poor darlen 'll die—Lord save her—an' *himself* 'll be fit to be tied, with lightness, afther—that 'll be the way of it."

But, like the good people of Islington, the rogues were out in their prognostic, for Lilly recovered of the fever—her robust father it was that died. We might be censured in

these enlightened times if we asserted that he took the fever from his nurseling; but it made little matter to poor Byrne whether the disease was contagious or no—for the fever he took, wherever he got it—and he died of it too—died after extorting—no—we do him and his daughter grievous wrong by using the word—after obtaining from Lilly a readily accorded promise that she would never receive Kumba again into her presence until he had gained a place for himself in the estimation of those whose esteem was worth his seeking, and until her mother should withdraw the interdict which *he* left upon his visits.

The reader may imagine what he pleases of the force of passion, and of female fickleness, and feebleness, and a great many other easily-mouthed phrases, which are more fashionable, we suspect, in certain romances, than in human nature; but we can assure him that there are girls in the world upon whose perseverance and resolution a reliance might be placed as secure as that which one would repose on the firmness of a Mina or a Bolivar—in situations far more trying than any which those rude, rocky-hearted fellows could be tempted with—a resolution, too, a great deal more noble in its motive than theirs; for those gentle creatures do from duty, and even in violence to their natures, what a great rough man will do from pride, and the impulse of a ferocious and passionate temperament. While the one breasts the shock as sulkily as a rocky headland in a tempest, the other yields and recoils alternately, blending the grace of submission with the dignity of self-assertion, like a willow in a swiftly gliding stream, seeming to droop and suffer itself to be hurried away by the torrent that has entrapped its boughs, while it clings with an easy determination to the bank where it has taken root. Lilly Byrne was just such a girl as we have described. Feeble in heart and frame as the feeblest of her sex, her conduct showed as if the energy which had been stolen by long suffering from the latter had been all transferred to her mind, and erected

there into a tower of strength, against which all the assaults of feeling and still surviving affection (for love like hers could not be extinguished) were unavailingly though powerfully directed. Religion was her grand stay in those days of pining and of solitude.

Startled by the dangerous illness with which she had been visited, and touched by the restoration of her health, she had looked earnestly from the interests of her heart to those of her soul, and had at length, after much self-examination, and prayer, and self-restraint, succeeded in obtaining the object of her exertions, that true religion which, by making all earthly affections subservient to the one eternal and divine, frees its votary from all possibility of an entanglement in the latter which could be dangerous to his peace of mind (at least). That true religion we mean, which, notwithstanding all the efforts of wit, and genius ill-directed, and learning ill-applied, has lain, and still continues to lie bedded amongst the instincts of the mighty heart of mankind, governing the tumultuous action of its passions, and sweetening all its impulses, inspiring it with that finely ambitious love which, scorning to fix itself upon any of the *results* of nature, mounts at once to the First Cause as well as the centre of all beauty, as the object most worthy of it, and there lies sheltered with all its hopes, its pains, its sorrows, and its fears, while the tempests of human evil roll in harmless murmurs to its feet, and the sunlight of human happiness is made more calm and sunny by the reflection of its smiles. That true religion which, far from steeling the tone of the heart to a philosophical indifference (as its calumniators say, while they mistake it for its ape, fanaticism), gives a keener edge to sympathy, a warmer pulse to moral feeling and affection, which bids the heart be hard to nothing but crime, cold to nothing but the suggestions of evil, and deaf to nothing but the call of selfishness, which presents the only and perfectly satisfactory solution that can be offered to that mighty enigma, the

creation, and which can make a grander spectacle still than all the material wonders of that creation—a man, at least equal to the philosopher in moral goodness and in dignity of endurance, and superior to the philosopher in sublimity of motive.

Sorrow, however, had been beforehand with piety in the heart of our little heroine; and though the latter re-conquered, or, at all events, contested the possession of the region with the spoiler, it could not repair the ravages which had been already made. The acuteness of the pang was blunted and made dull, and a sweetness was breathed upon the festering wound that tempered and allayed its anguish; but neither the danger nor the suffering were removed—for religion, even such as hers, is a soother and paraclete, not a liberator; and the world would be no longer a place of probation if it were otherwise. The last struggle which Lilly had to maintain against her own heart was on the day on which Kumba, after suffering many months to pass away without daring to intrude upon the grief of the family, requested (by a letter, addressed, with a delicacy of which he was very capable, and which Lilly appreciated at its full worth, to Mrs. Byrne) to be permitted to visit them.

Lilly and her mother were both seated at the breakfast-table when the messenger entered with the note.

"A letter that one left for you, ma'am."

"From whom, James?—give it me," said Mrs. Byrne.

The servant approached, watching the eyes of "the young missiz," and availing himself of every moment when they were turned from him, to communicate, by a hundred cautionary grimaces, gestures, winks, jerks of the head, dilations of the eyes and mouth, and other strange contortions, some indication of the nature of its contents. Mrs. Byrne, however, was not sufficiently quick of apprehension.

"What do you mean, James? Why *don't* you give me the letter?"

"Bekays he toult me—to—you know"—(turning his back towards Lilly, and pointing his thumb slily over his shoulder, while his eyes seemed to reverse themselves in their sockets)—"he did, indeed."

"Well, you are the queerest man that ever lived. He did *what?* Who *did?*"

"Mr. Kumba did!" thundered the man, exasperated beyond all patience. "Roberth Kumba, sense I can't make you see it—that's what he did. There's no use in talking!" he added, grumbling, as he tossed the letter carelessly on the breakfast-table, and turned to depart.

Lilly did not start—nor break a tea-cup—nor scream—nor perform any other of those antics of astonishment which, perhaps, those of my fair readers who are versed in the stage-business of romance might have expected from her.

More quick of eye and apprehension than her mother, she had formed a just conjecture on the subject, from the moment she beheld the servant's caution, on entering the room, and Mrs. Byrne, had she looked towards her daughter, might have seen in her flushed and whitening forehead, her trembling lip, and straining bosom, that which would have saved her the trouble of asking so many questions, and the sin of putting James in a passion.

"It is from Robert, indeed," said Mrs. Byrne, looking for her spectacles—"who brought it, James?"

"I'll tell you that, thin, ma'am," said James, turning suddenly round, and forgetting all his anger in the interest of the new question. "I'll tell you all about that," he repeated in a soft tone, as if fearful of being overheard; then bending his person, and stretching his head to the furthest limit that his neck (as coarse, and almost as long, as a cable) would permit, while he still held the handle of the door behind his back, "I'll tell you that," he once more repeated, hushing the tone of his voice into a whisper that was all but inaudible,—"*himself* no less!"—and then, confirming by a nod the truth of what he alleged, he sud-

denly drew himself up to his full height, and stared as if in sympathy with the astonishment he had excited.

"My goodness!" exclaimed both the ladies.

"Iss, indeed," James continued, gathering his hands together under the skirt of his coat, and renewing his nod of emphatic assertion.

"And is he below, James?" inquired Mrs. Byrne.

"Oh, below! what below, ma'am?" said James, his head recoiling with a tone and action of remonstrance and astonishment—"Is it into the house he'd come? No, indeed. But I'll tell you what," he added, walking a few paces further into the centre of the room, placing his *cauboge* (old hat) upon a chair, looking fixedly in the eyes of his auditors, and throwing his disencumbered arms out from his shoulders, as if preparing for a regular oration. "Here's the way it was. Goen to the ford, over, I was, this mornen, to water the little filly-foal, the same that Miss Lilly there used to be riden, whin she'd be along with *him* (and a good warrant you had at it, too, miss," he interpolated by way of parenthesis, while he grinned at Lilly). an' I trotten along, thinken o' nothen, along the road, whin all of a suddent, I felt a great change comen in the baste under me. Oh, sarrow word of a lie I'm tellen. Lord save us! says I, is it any then bad that's there? and hardly the word was out o' me mouth, whin 'James!' says he, above upon the hedge. Oh, it's fact 'James!' says he, on the hedge. Lord between us and harm, says I, who is it that's callen me? says I. 'Don't you know me, James?' says he again; Mr. Kumba, indeed, he did. Aw thin, sur, says I, is that you? ''Tis, indeed, James,' says he. So we stopped a minute, looken at one another. Why thin, it's a long while since I seen you, now, sir, says I. He made me no answer to that, but after a while, 'James, says he, 'I'm sorry for your *trouble*.* westwards.' Heaven's will be done, sir, says I, you needn't tell me that,

* A favourite phrase of condolence among the peasantry, the loss of any member of a family.

an' sure 'twas true for me, ma'am—for—" looking all round the room for an illustration—" see, 'twas as pale as this table cloth, his face was—and his eyes sunk in his head, within, an' his cheeks all gone, intirely. He looked, you'd think, *as if he wasn't there at all*, you'd think, a'most. Not but," he added, on meeting Lilly's eye—" he's greatly improved from what he was, I'm told, and thriving again very fast, but still an' all 'twould make the stones weep to look at him. 'Well, James, isn't it greatly they wouldn't let me come a near 'em, at all,' says he, 'an' my heart bleeden to hear about *it*.' He did, indeed, miss. Sir, says I, sarious, this way, I never spake o' the famaly, says I, but there never was a smoke without a fire yet, an' begging your pardon, says I, may be, if you behaved honester (*i.e.* more mildly) whin you were there, you'd have the liberty o' the place to-day, says I, the same as ever. 'Why, then, I believe it's true *for* you, James,' says he, and then he continued moven unaisy about for a *feow* minutes, like one that would have somethen on his mind, you'd think; an' at last, 'James,' says he, 'would you do me a favour now, an' I'll do as much for you another time,' says he. If you never did anything for me, sir, says I, I'll do it and welcome, and I would too, ma'am. With that, he put it into my hand—the letter—he did, and says he, 'don't let your young missiz see you given of it, James, says he—'an' I'll wait here,' says he, 'until such time as you bring me an answer, and don't delay it, James, if you can, for my heart is within it,' says he. He did indeed. Signs on, see the state I'm in, racen hether wit it," he continued, pressing his open hand upon his brow, and wiping away some drops of perspiration, " an' there he is, waiting this way, over, in the sally-grove, seeing would he get a favourable answer to the petition." And having graced his peroration with a suitable gesture, James took up his hat again, and remained silent, looking alternately into the eyes of both his auditors, as if to observe the effect of his narrative.

"He has taken the proper course, at all events," said the old lady, showing the superscription. To Mrs. *Byrne*, Drumscamlon, to her daughter.

Lilly did not answer, but her glowing cheek and brightening eye showed that her mother's observation was not lost upon her.

"Am I to wait for the commands below, ma'am?" said James—an innate sense of delicacy (a quality which even the humblest of the Irish possesses to a great degree, in common with the people of strong feelings) informing him that, although they had forgotten his presence, it could not but be an incumbrance at the present moment.

"You may, James," said Mrs. Byrne, "but don't be out o' the way."

"Is it *I* be out o' the way, ma'am!" James murmured in surprise as he left the room.

They proceeded to examine the contents of the letter.

CHAPTER XII.

Pisano.—Madam, here is a letter from my lord.
Imogen.—Who? Thy lord? that is my lord—
O learned indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his character,
He'd lay the future open.
Cymbeline.

It is most extraordinary to observe how completely, how utterly, as age grows upon us, we lose sight of all the lesser feelings and sympathies of our youth—how perfectly incapable we become of entering into all the fineries of our early condition of mind and heart, when re-acted in our presence by those to whom they have descended. With all Lilly's patience, she could not help wondering at the comparatively uninterested way in which her mother proceeded

to wipe her spectacles, drive her old friend the tortoise-shell cat from her knee, examine the seal, and smile at the device and motto, a crucible, with "swift yet sure" beneath, the popular allusion of which she readily understood, before she gratified the longing ears and eyes of Lilly with a disclosure of the contents. Kumba spoke truly when he told James that his heart was in it—and certainly, if mere words *ought* to have made way with the widow and her child, the appeal which it contained would not have been unsuccessful.

"I only wish, my dear Mrs. Byrne," he continued, after having made his object known in a very sensible and yet feeling manner, "I only wish that you would give me an opportunity of showing you that the great impropriety of conduct (to say the least of it) of which I was guilty in your presence, was not the effect of habitual but accidental ill-temper. It was an occasion which I cannot think on without grief and humiliation; but when you agree with me in reprehending it, do not forget, my dear madam, I beseech you, the sufferings which it has already brought upon me.

"To your feelings, as a mother, I appeal for some indication of what those sufferings must have been. Consider how you would have felt, if any circumstances had excluded you from the sick chamber and the bedside of your daughter, your only child, whom you loved so tenderly, when she lay in a dangerous illness—and think whether in the absolute necessity of those circumstances, and their being unmerited by any act of yours, would be sufficient to reconcile you to the privation. If not, my dear madam, what must have been the torture of my heart, when I had to endure a similar banishment, and had not even that ineffectual resource of a secure conscience to comfort my heart—when I heard, hour after hour, of some new grief, some new calamity befalling her in whose happiness all mine was centered; and yet could not but acknowledge that you were all acting

right in shutting me out from her presence, and that the suffering which I deplored, and the agony which I felt, was all the work of my own hands—that I had been the cause of my own rejection from the paradise I sought—the cause of my poor, gentle, but justly indignant Lilly's illness—of your displeasure—of——Oh, madam, even while I write, the stinging of my own heart tells me that I have done *too* much, and that I ought not to be heard.

"Nevertheless, I send the letter as I have written it. If I should be still doomed to suffer for that unhappy morning, however dreadful my life may become to me, be assured that never even in thought will I entertain the suspicion that I have any thing to blame but my own unprovoked and wanton rudeness for my misery.

"Robert Kumba."

Mrs. Byrne slowly folded the letter, and remained, meditating for a moment, while she endeavoured to make the bowl of a tea-spoon float in her cup.

Lilly, whose countenance had changed almost as many times as there were sentences in the letter, during its perusal, remained anxiously expecting the speech of her mother. She had, during the early part, manifested a degree of warmth and approbation (in her look and manner only,) which, had Kumba beheld her at the moment, would have put him in fine spirits, but before her mother stopped reading, the expression of her face had altered. The tears, which his allusion to her own illness had brought into her eyes, were checked upon the lids, the glow on her cheek became fainter, the panting hope that struggled in her bosom appeared to subside, and a slight degree of chagrin and of disappointment was manifest upon her brow and lip.

"It is a very *nice* letter, my dear," said Mrs. Byrne, "but it does not contain all that we want to know. I believe we always gave him credit for feeling—but why does he not mention anything of the farm all this while?"

"The reason appears to be, mother, that he has mistaken our motives altogether. Surely neither you nor I, nor any body else, eve rcould have intended to make that unfortunate fit of passion a cause for utter *banishment*, as he calls it. My poor dead father was not so inveterate. He even attributed a great portion of the blame on that morning to himself."

"Ah, my dear, your poor father was a great deal too forgiving. Heaven forgive *me* for saying so—I mean for his own worldly interests; but I thank Heaven he was so, for if it were otherwise he could not have hoped for the reward that, I trust, he is now enjoying."

"Neither ought Robert to suppose that he has had all the suffering to himself," said Lilly, while she strove to keep herself from crying.

"You are very right, my love," replied Mrs. Byrne, turning emphatically towards her, "and *that* is very selfish of him, to say so, certainly."

Lilly meant only the internal suffering to both, consequent on their separation; but the matter-of-fact old lady took it for granted that so strong a word would only be used with application to the physical calamities of all parties, and Lilly was too timid and delicate to explain—so that the undeserved censure was suffered to remain upon poor Kumba's shoulders.

These are the mistakes that set the world by the ears.

After some farther conversation, it was agreed that Mrs. Byrne should answer Robert's letter, or *petition*, as James called it—by undeceiving him with respect to the cause of his exile—laying down the condition of his recall, which was to be such an improvement in the circumstances of his property and his conduct as would suffice to justify a reasonable hope of his perseverence; and, finally, a friendly exhortation to him, that he would make an exertion to restore to all as much as yet remained on earth of the peace which they had lost."

"Mother!" said Miss Byrne, as she was about to leave the room—"you will tell him I had not forgotten him." And having with difficulty restrained herself while she uttered the sentence, she hurried away to relieve her heart in the solitude of her own apartment.

By another of those *contre-iems*, which, however slight in themselves, yet involve so deep and very often tragical consequences in the history of the human heart, it unfortunately happened, that Mrs. Byrne (who, as my readers may before now have conjectured, was not one of those persons who can think of one thing and attend to another at the same time) was, at the very moment when Lilly spoke, absorbed in the consideration whether she should address the letter "My Dear Sir," or "My Dear Robert," and never heard, and, consequently, never gave Lilly's remembrance. The letter wanted it too—(which was worse and worse)—for the precise, good-natured lady took so much pains to communicate every thing in so very *proper* terms, in so neat a hand, and with so many almost invisible erasures—nicely polished over with the finger nail (so as that the ink should not sink)—and other pretty precautions, that poor Kumba, when he got it, felt as if he had walked unawares under a waterfall.

He might, perhaps, have yet received enough of encouragement to stimulate him to some exertion, if he had known how often Lilly wept upon her mother's neck in the course of that and the following day. But there was nothing to alleviate the coldness of the letter which indeed would have been perceptible to a person composed of much less combustible and enthusiastic materials than himself. The effect which it did produce on him we have already seen, and the accounts which reached the inmates of Drumscanlon of his excesses, contributed more effectually than all she had before endured, to shatter the feeble remains of Lilly's constitution, render her more assiduous in all her duties, more silent, more resigned, more woe-worn

more gentle and timid, more smiling, more cheerful, and broken-hearted.*

One of the principal of these last was a ceremony which the innovations of modern custom has restricted altogether to the humble classes of Irish life. Every morning, before any part of her household affairs were permitted to obtrude themselves upon her attention, she walked to an old church, about a "small mile" from her own residence, for the purpose of "paying a round" that is to say, offering up, on her knees, a few prayers for the repose of the spirit of him who was sleeping beneath the mound, of soliciting an increase of strength to abide by the resolution she had formed, and commemorating the sacrifice she had made of her own feelings and happiness to his dying wishes. An accident, which occurred during one of those morning excursions occasioned the conversation which took place between Kumba and the Suil Dhuv on their first introduction to the reader.

Lilly had been, a few mornings previous to the day on which the old Palatine arrived at the inn upon the mountains, kneeling, as usual, in the morning sunshine at the foot of her father's grave, her hands clasped, and her head bowed down in pious reverence, when she was startled by hearing the ivy rustle upon the low and ruined wall beside her. Raising her eyes quickly, and in some alarm, she beheld the face of a man, whom she recognised as an occasional labourer of her father's, staring in upon her devotions with some expression of surprise and compassion.

"Whisht! whisht, Miss!" he exclaimed, waving his

* The last word may startle many of those readers who (in the fashion at present) look for good sense and truth in novels—more especially as one of the most popular modern writers of this class has pronounced the phrase a vulgar error. He is mistaken, however. Dr. Farre, among the many discoveries relative to this delicate organ with which he has enlightened the world, has proved that a broken heart may be, and has been, a mechanical effect of grief.

hand to her, as if to signify that she should not regard his presence.

"How did you know that I was here, Jerry? Were you sent for me?" said Lilly, rising from her knees.

"O no, Miss—not I—but—" observing her eyes red from weeping—"you oughtn't to do that at all, Miss. *He* wouldn't like it."

"Why so?"

"Tisn't *good*, Miss. I knew meself of a time, a lone woman, a widow, that used to be goen that way every day to cry over her son that was buried in the church-yard—an' at last, you see, one day as she was kneeling that way, an' claspen her hands, and *ochoneing* over the grave, she hard somethen above her, upon the wall, as it might be this way as I am now—and sure, what should be there but himself. 'Ah then, darlen?' says she, 'is that you Mike? Lord save us!' 'E'then it is so, mother,' says he, 'and don't do that any more,' says he. 'Oh then, what for, shouldn't I cry over you, Mike, darlen?' says she, looken at him. 'No, don't, mother,' says he, 'for its well I suffered to you for all you cried already. Look here!' says he, liften up the winden-sheet that was upon him, and showen her his side all full of holes.* 'There's one of them,' says he, 'for every tear you shed for me,' says he, 'and don't do it any more upon me, mother,' says he. 'No, I won't indeed, Mike,' says the poor woman, dryen her eyes at once. 'Don't thin,' says he agen, an' he vanished. An' she didn't either."

"Well, I thank you for the advice, Jerry, but I will thank you still more, if you will not say a word of your having seen me here, to any body."

"Is it I say a word of it?" said Jerry O'Gilvy, indignantly.

He did say a word of it however, and two words; and

* This is a common superstition frequently used in the hours of condolence.

this circumstance it was that induced Suil Dhuv to suggest to his dupe, Kumba, the idea of meeting Lilly at the place to which Jerry would conduct him, a grove lying on her road home from the church-yard; the latter being strictly cautioned by the Coiner not to make the young man aware of the object of her morning walk, for he had penetration enough to know that Kumba's feeling, if not his principle, would never permit him to disturb her on such a mission, —indeed we might say his common sense, for, however much he trusted to the effect which he might be enabled to produce on Lilly's resolution in a personal interview, he could expect, nothing less, than an indignant and final repulse to such an attempt as the present. Neither would it have answered the views of Suil Dhuv that they *should* meet, or that Kumba should in any way succeed in his wishes. It was enough for him to have acquired an additional influence over the mind of the latter, by making the proposition—he was not by any means so anxious as his friend imagined, that it should proceed to a satisfactory accomplishment. This, however, was sufficiently provided against, by a slight circumstance which took place the very evening before. An anonymus note directed to Miss. Byrne, and informing her in two lines of Kumba's design, which was left at Drumscanlon, not only filled her with indignation but effectually confined her to the house, while Kumba and his *chaperon* Jerry beat about the grove until noon, in vain. The note was left at the kitchen door, by a thin, sharp faced, and bare footed lad, who neither made nor answered inquiries, and of whose mission James could collect no farther indication than that he spoke in a half-*Englified* way about "dis, an dat, and de oder ting."

Thus circumstances stood at Drumscanlon, on the day preceding that which was destined to involve, in so singular a conjecture, the fortunes of so many characters in our history.

CHAPTER XIII.

Brabantio.—My daughter, O my daughter
Senators.—Dead?
Brabantio.—To me.
She is stolen from me!—

Othello.

THE day following was (as the reader has already been made aware) the Eha-na-Shaun, or the Eve of St. John's-day, a festival which is celebrated in Ireland with peculiar devotion. The people have a number of traditions current among them, relative to the origin of many of the ceremonies peculiar to this vigil (one of the most remarkable of which latter is, the lighting up of fires on the mountains, and indeed in all parts of the country about even-fall—the appearance of which on this night occasioned so much terror to the Coiner). It is believed by some that the ceremony is nothing more than a relic of the idolatrous worship of the aborigines of the soil—while a greater number of the peasantry suppose that they commemorate by those nocturnal illuminations, a general massacre of the ancient enemies of the land, the unfortunate Danes, who were (as the cottage historians assert) all slaughtered one fine summer evening (the signal for the general uprising of the oppressed natives being a number of beacon fires, lighted on every hill, hillock, mount and mountain throughout the country)—and who have left no other memorial of their dearly purchased conquest in this still unsubdued, though often conquered island—than the ruined *lish*, or fort, through whose woody covering the night wind sighs above their bones—or the mouldered and almost rust-eaten coin that is thrown up by the *blaster* or quarrier in the lonely regions of the inland—to furnish matter of speculation to some pantalooned and spectacled antiquarian of the R. I. A.—or Dublin Society.

The fires had already been lighted on the fields adjacent

to Drumscanlon, when Lilly Byrne, having discharged, as was her never-failing custom, all her household duties to the very letter—given the servants their dinner—cut out the slim-cake for the evening—set some milk in a saucer for the cat—counted all the linen into the press—seen the ducks, hens, and chickens fed—the cows milked—the dairy set in order—the garden-gate locked—the outter printed—the mouse-traps baited—and the dough set by the fire—when Lilly Byrne, having discharged, we say, all those duties, sat in her chamber making her little preparations with an aching heart, at her toilet, to perform a cheerful part among a small family tea-party, who were invited to spend the evening at Drumscanlon.

Poor Lilly's toilet was not now a matter of very excessive labour or concern to her. She was careful to omit nothing in the adjustment of her dress (a simple suit of mourning) which the general custom of the time rendered absolutely necessary to prevent the appearance of affectation or a disrespectful singularity; but no adornment that a positive feeling of duty did not point out to her, was any longer used. Human motive was now fatally quelled within her bosom, and she no longer felt those little struggles between her love for things "lawful though dangerous," and her fears of secret vanity, which had given rise to nearly all the trials of her girlish virtue, when there *was* a reason why she should look to good advantage in other eyes than her own. She rejected, therefore, the fine jet necklace which her mother had left upon her table, and contented herself with the plain silk ribbon and black cross which lay near it, in one of the little recesses of her dressing-box.

In loitering among the now neglected trinkets which were thrown together in the casket, she removed a piece of paper, folded, and marked on the outside in her own handwriting (as if by the way of index to the contents), with the initials R. K. Those contents were a song adapted by her lover to one of the old ballad airs of the country, which

Lilly had often sung to her harpsichord (when the young gentleman was *not* present, for she was far too scrupulous to flatter his vanity at any time by letting him hear how she honoured it)—and which, as Lilly *did* think it worth singing, we shall venture to transcribe :—

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

I.

I've come unto my home again and find myself alone—
The friends I left in quiet there are perished all and gone.
My father's house is tenantless—my early loves lie low!
But one remains of all that made my youthful spirit glow!
My love lies by the blushing West, drest in a robe of green,
And pleasant waters sing to her and know her for their queen:
The wild winds fan her face, that o'er the distant billows come—
She is my last remaining love—my own—my island home.

II.

I know I've not the cunning got to tell the love I feel,
And few give timid truth the faith they yield to seeming zeal.
The friends who loved me, thought me cold, and fell off one by one
And left me in my solitude to live and love alone.
But each pleasant grove of thine, my love, and stream, my fervour know—
For there is no distrusting glance to meet and check its flow—
To every dell I freely tell my thoughts, where'er I roam,
How dear thou art to this lorn heart, my own—my island home!

III.

And when I lift my voice and sing unto thy silent shades,
And echo wakens merrily in all thy drowsy glades,
There's not a rill—a vale—a hill—a wild wood or still grove,
But gives again the burning strain, and yields me love for love.
Oh, I have seen the maiden of my bosom pine and die—
And I have seen my bosom friend look on me doubtingly—
And long—O long—have all my young affections found a tomb—
Yet thou art all in all to me, my own—my island home!

IV.

And now I bring a weary thing—a withered heart to thee—
To lay me down upon thy breast and die there quietly.
I've wandered o'er—O, many a shore, to die this death at last—
And my soul is glad—its wish is gained, and all my toils are past.

Oh, take me to thy bosom then, and let the spot of earth
Receive the wanderer to his rest, that gave the wanderer birth—
And the stream, beside whose gentle tide a child I loved to roam—
Now pour its wave along my grave, my narrow island home!

The recollection of the circumstances under which Kumba had placed these verses in her hand, threw Lilly into a train of feeling which would have been dangerous to her resolution of meeting her mother's friends with a gay spirit becoming the occasion—had not her meditations been interrupted by the slight pressure of that mother's hand upon her neck, as she leaned forward in her chair.

"Well, Lilly, my love, will you not come down? The company are waiting, and Mrs. Hasset has been asking for you no less than three times. What! you have been crying again, I declare! Well, then! O then, to be sure, now, Lilly!"

"Ah, mother, do not blame me. It is not for the Robert Kumba that is now wholly abandoned to low courses, I weep, but for him who was so kind, so generous, so amiable, so feeling! Do not think that any degree either of hope or of discontent mingles with my regret. I look upon myself, on the contrary, as one who has been providentially delivered from a veiled and certain danger. Neither," she added, as she observed her mother's eyes glisten and fill, "neither have I given up all hope even of this world's happiness. Can it be criminal, mother, in me to suffer such a hope to mingle with those which are fixed where they cannot change or darken? Was it criminal in me, just now, when I knelt before the Almighty, to offer up a tear and a prayer for *him;* and to indulge the belief (illusive perhaps) that even at that moment my sorrow might have found its way to the throne of Heaven, and that some single pang, some misfortune, some threatened danger, might have been spared to my once-loved friend in mercy to my agony?"

The reader, who has accompanied Kumba through the

events of this day, might perhaps have told Lilly a secret on this subject.

"I will own, mother," she continued, after a pause, while the afflicted old lady endeavoured by caresses and entreaties to console her, "that it cost me some struggles, and was a long while before I brought myself to make the sacrifice *of* myself entirely thus—and if I do not deceive my own heart—if indeed it *is* made, I have no merit in it—for it seems to me to be only the pressure of repeated disappointments in my fondest wishes, that has at last conquered my obstinate will. You think me melancholy, now, mother," she added, smiling with real cheerfulness, as she looked into the eyes of her parent, "but indeed I am not. I do not," she continued, smiling yet more gaily, and hesitating a little, while she laid her finger on a borrowed volume of the letters of a celebrated and titled authoress, which were then creating a general sensation in England, (a sensation that time has little diminished)—"I do not, at present at least, feel that mortification which this lady expresses at growing wiser every day and seeing, like Solomon, the vanity of all temporal concerns. And is not that a great deal? Come, mother, you shall see that I can be happy in spite of my own peevish wishes," and passing her handkerchief over her thin, white, and wasted, but light and pleasant countenance, she paused one moment with clasped hands on the threshold of the door, and moved her lips as if to solicit an increase of contentment and resignation; after which she breathed one short sigh as a last tribute to the dominion of melancholy for the evening, and quietly followed her mother.

One very brief but painful struggle only she had to endure, when first the sounds of merriment broke upon her now unaccustomed ear. It was the first time that any number of friends (for relatives only, and those a few, were invited) had met in that apartment since those two dear ones had been lost to the circle. Another vigorous exer-

tion, however, enabled our little heroine to recover her self possession.

There are few trials which the resigned spirit has to encounter, more distressing than to find its fortitude mistaken for real, positive happiness. Those who feel their constitution sapped and shaken by some chronic disease, know how dreary a thing it is to be congratulated by a friend on their good looks—clapped on the shoulder—and told that they are better than ever they were in their life; while the secret malady is silently eating away the foundation of their existence within, and reminding them perhaps, at the very instant that they make a ghastly effort to correspond with the gay and smiling countenance of their well-wisher—reminding them, by a new pang, of the deadly certainty of their doom. Although Lilly Byrne had long since compelled herself to refrain in all instances from any act, word, or look, which had no other object than that of attracting pity to her sufferings (contenting herself according to the precept of her religion, with having the Being that visited her with these for their only witness)—still she could not help feeling a certain blank and dismal solitariness of spirit when her friends all rose and crowded round her as she entered, smiling, pressing her hand, and congratulating her on her merry looks—when Mrs. Hasset, a rather subordinate relative of the family, took her seat in Robert Kumba's old place, on the chintz-covered settee, and laughed, and shook her head, and "knew it would not last, so she did!" "Time did wonders," the old lady slily insinuated; and though it was very true that—

> "Love is longer than the way,
> Love is deeper than the sea;"

yet even the sea itself would run dry at last if the rivers were cut off—and it would be a very long way indeed, that did not come to an end or a *turning*, at any rate [this word was pronounced with a very roguish emphasis] at some

time or another. Lilly would forget it all before she was twice married. There was Mrs. Blaney, mother to the Blaneys of the Hill, some of whom were there, sitting opposite her—who went on *just in the same way as Lilly*, when she was *slighted* by her first lover; nobody thought she'd ever recover again, and see there she was now, the mother of a set of fine young men as any in the three counties; and the grandmother of that little fat girl that sat, looking shily round upon the company. So let Lilly not be *down* about it—for she had only to set her cap at the right side of her head, to win a better offer than she had lost *the last trick*.

Although Lilly endured all this martyrdom without a single look or even wilful thought of impatience, we should accord her a degree of fortitude, perhaps beyond the reach of sympathy or truth, if we said that she did not feel inexpressibly relieved when the entrance of the tea diverted the worthy Mrs. Hassett's attention from her and her sorrows. While the good lady was occupied in bestowing her admiration on the transparency of the immense china bowl—the delicacy and shortness of the slim-cake—discussing the respective merits of the Cork and Limerick groceries—(Uncle Cuthbert and herself having always a dispute on this subject whenever they met)—and deploring the economy of some neighbouring family who never brought out tea to their visiters at luncheon, a practice which the novelty of the beverage in those days made fashionable in the country parts of Ireland—Lilly stole on to a group of grown girls who were gathered around little Blaney above mentioned, some on their knees before her—others leaning on the back of her chair, and all joining in a request that she would give them a song.

When Lilly Byrne approached her she looked with a timid smile from beneath her brow, and said—"I'll sing it you bid me, I will."

"I do, then, my little darling," said Lilly, kissing her.

The girl then plucked up courage, and chanted with a tremulous little pipe, a piece of nursery namby-pamby, which ran as follows :—

I.

What are little boys made of—made of?
What are little boys made of?
Of snips and snails
And puppy-dog's tails—
That's what little boys are made of.

II.

What are little girls made of—made of?
What are little girls made of?
Of sugar and spice,
And all that's nice—
That's what little girls are made of.

Before the murmurs of approbation and encouragement had subsided—and while Mrs. Hassett was *declaring* that the wee songstress had a fine clear voice and a very good ear, and ought not to be neglected, the latter ran over to Lilly, and throwing herself into her lap, looked up in her eyes and sayed, in her little brogue, "If you plase, I call on oo for a song, now."

"What song, my love?"

"The song you know yourself about 'Old time,' you know."

Lilly had as lief, for certain reasons, that her young friend had spoken of some other song—but seating herself immediately at her harpsichord, she complied with great sweetness. We happen to have a copy of the stanzas in our possession :—

Old times! old times! the gay old times
When I was young and free,
And heard the merry Easter chimes
Under the sally tree.
My Sunday palm beside me placed—
My cross upon my hand—
A heart at rest within my breast,
And sunshine on the land!
Old times! old times!

II

It is not that my fortunes flee,
Nor that my cheek is pale—
I mourn whene'er I think of thee,
My darling native vale!—
A wiser head I have, I know,
Than when I loitered there—
But in my wisdom there is woe,
And in my knowledge, care.
Old times! old times!

III.

I've lived to know my share of joy,
To feel my share of pain—
To learn that friendship's self can cloy,
To love and love in vain—
To feel a pang and wear a smile
To tire of other climes—
To like my own unhappy isle,
And sing the gay old times!
Old times! old times!

IV.

And sure the land is nothing changed,
The birds are singing still;
The flowers are springing where we ranged,
There's sunshine on the hill!
The sally, waving o'er my head,
Still sweetly shades my frame—
But ah, those happy days are fled,
And I am not the same!
Old times! old times!

V.

Oh, come again, ye merry times!
Sweet, sunny, fresh, and calm—
And let me hear those Easter chimes,
And wear my Sunday palm.
If I could cry away mine eyes
My tears would flow in vain—
If I could waste my heart in sighs,
They'd never come again!
Old times! old times.

"Very well! Sweetly sung indeed, Lilly," said Mrs. Hassett—"but I think you used to sing it with more spirit long ago. The last time I heard you I believe was when—"

"O, no matter when, Ma'am," said Lilly, laughing off the frightful reminiscence, that the worthy old lady was about to blunder upon in her honest, plain way—"but I must use my privilege." And wishing to stop the good woman's tongue in one way, by employing it another, a stratagem which she was the more induced to adopt, as she knew that the very shortest of Mrs. Hassett's songs would consume a considerable portion of the evening, she flung her mantle in turn to that lady.

Mrs. Hassett's little melody completely disinclined the company from any farther amusement in the vocal way, the more especially as the night had fallen, in the meanwhile, and the darkness was so great by the time she had wound up the history of "The lady of skin and bone," that the company could no longer discern each other's faces.

"Lilly, my love, I think it would be almost time to get the candles," said Mrs. Byrne.

"How suddenly the night fell!" said Mrs. Hassett. "It looks as if we were to have a storm, and I brought nothing but my pattens and cloak."

"Oh, we can manage that very well," said Mrs. Byrne. "Well, Lilly, what about the candles?"

"I told James to get them ready an hour since, mother."

"Ring the bell for him, my dear."

Lilly did so.

"I don't know what keeps our uncle Cuthbert so late," said Mrs. Byrne; "he was to have been here before now. We had all such laughing at him the other morning, about a bargain he made; with whom, guess?"

"Oh, indeed, I heard of it—Manny Mac O' Neil. the gold-finder. That was a pretty business."

"He went off with two of the sub-sheriff's men this mor-

ning to look for the fellow. Eh? Heaven preserve us! Was not that lightning?"

"Oh, no—it was but the flashing of the candle-light from the hall upon the tea-things."

"But there's no candle-light in the hall, mother," said Lilly, "or 'twould be here before now. I wonder why James doesn't answer the bell."

"I'll be bound," said Mrs. Byrne, "he's gone out to look at the bonfires on the furzhill. Will you run down, and see what keeps him, Lilly? and take care now, not to hurt yourself with the bad step at the foot of the stairs, as you're in the dark."

Lilly left the room, closing the door behind her.

Immediately after, the distant muttering of the thunder placed Mrs. Byrne's conjecture out of the reach of all doubt. The conversation of the company became hushed and broken—and confined altogether to observations on the effect of the change.

The door again opened and shut.

"Well, Lilly, where are the candles?" said Mrs. Byrne, "Is James below?"

There was no answer. "Who was it came in?" said Mrs. Byrne. "Ah, come now, Lilly—no tricks, if you please. This is no time for joking. Why don't you answer girl?"

The handle of the door again turned—and again it was shut fast.

"Bless me!" exclaimed one of the young ladies, starting from her chair, and clasping Mrs. Hassett's shoulder.

"What's the matter, you foolish child?"

"Oh, Ma'am," the girl replied, panting with fear, "I—I don't know—but something brushed close by me."

"Pooh!—nonsense!" said Mrs. Byrne, peevishly. "Well, Lilly, my lady," she added gaily, while her heart failed her, "I'll pay you for this. You're a pretty girl, to oblige me to leave my guests."

So saying, Mrs. Byrne left the room, the guests remaining hushed in an anxiety which their hostess's affected levity did not at all tend to alleviate.

In a few minutes, Mrs. Byrne re-entered with a light—her countenance being moved with an expression between vexation and real terror.

"I beg your pardon," she said hurriedly, "but I see this girl is determined to play the fool to-night. She has hid herself somewhere or other," she added, forcing herself to believe what her heart and her knowledge of Lilly's character ought to have prevented her admitting for an instant.

They all proceeded to search the house. The hall door was found open—the wind and rain driving in, and wetting the large arm chairs that were placed beneath the hat-racks. But Lilly was no where to be seen.

The silence, the suddenness of this disappearance, had something supernatural in it. It was a long time before the wretched mother would admit the reality of her misfortune? but when, at last, it burst upon her mind so forcibly as to break down all the opposition which her fears had raised against the conviction, the scene which Drumscanlon presented was such as no one, who had witnessed the quiet, social enjoyment of the family party an hour before, could possibly have anticipated—the guests hurrying to and fro, or standing still and staring on one another in silent astonishment, while the poor distracted hostess, forgetting all the ceremonies of her station, hastened from room to room, mingling her heavy screams of terror with the pealing of the thunder, and clasping her hands, with the action expressive of deep affliction which is so peculiar to her country.

CHAPTER XIV.

"O smite softe, siro mine," quod she.—*Chaucer.*

The reader, however, can learn but little of the causes of this change by remaining to witness the affliction of the good old lady. We shall, therefore, once more, venture to pinion the wings of old Time, while we relate an incident that may assist in explaining them.

Mrs. Byrne evinced nothing more than an acquaintance with the character of her servant, James Mihil, when she supposed that he had been seduced into a neglect of his domestic duties on this evening, by a curiosity to witness and participate in the festivities of the Eha-na-Shaun. Having, as he imagined, completed all the offices which fell to his share, on the occasion, seen the party fairly established at tea—the griddle laid aside to cool—the turf-basket outside the parlour-door, replenished with good hard sods, broken small so as to take the fire kindly—the silver-plated candlesticks nicely polished, and set in order on the kitchen-table—so that if any unforeseen misfortune should detain him, Miss Lilly should have nothing more to do than to light them with the twisted touch-paper he had placed near them: having taken all these precautions, and, moreover, unlooped from the wall above his own settle-bed a small bottle of last Easter Sunday's holy water, which he preserved with an economical reverence, sprinkling his fore-head with the consecrated liquid, and left the house, not without keeping a wary eye about him as he proceeded, lest some evil disposed spirit of the night should take him at an advantage.

Within a few hundred yards of the house, lay a large field which was allotted to a few *collop* of cattle, as grazing ground, in extent being greatly disproportionate to the quantity of its herbage; a circumstance which was in some measure accounted for by the number of furze bushes which

were scattered over it. The night was already dark, before James descended the earthern stile which led into the field —and the brilliancy of this little district in itself, made the gloom of the surrounding heavens still more dense and impenetrable. The bushes had been set on fire, at various corners of the field, and were now crackling and blazing away with great fury. The herdsman of the farm and some of his retainers, with lighted faggots in their hands, were chasing the cows back and forward making them sometimes leap in their desperation over the flames, and burning the hair on their sides with their faggots—a practice which is supposed to avert the curse of barrenness in the herd. After exchanging a salutation and a few ready jokes with the men, James proceeded slowly, his hands behind his back and a broad grin of admiration on his features, towards the central bonfire of the field.

While he stood gazing on the blackened trunk and boughs of the burning shrub, the flame, as it were, hollowing out a dwelling for itself in the centre, while it left the green and blossomy texture overhead yet uninjured, his attention was attracted by the approach of two strange men, who seemed as if they had been exhausted by a long and rapid journey on foot. One of them was a tall, awkwardly built fellow, to whom James did not pay any particular attention! but no the other—a low, thin-faced lad, with the patched and corduroy trowsers turned up on his bare legs, he could not avoid fixing his eyes, with a certain misgiving that he had seen the face under suspicious circumstances, somewhere or another, before. The usual greeting having passed between both parties—

"A smart evenen, Sir," said the lesser of the two.

James accorded an assent.

"We made so bold, Sir," he continued, very respectfully, "to step out of the high road—a bad night comen on—an' to ask lave, Sir, to stand here, Sir, be the fire, to take a hait o' de blaze agen the road, Sir."

"You're kindly welcome," said James, "without *sirring* the likes o' me at all so much about it."

"Thanky, Sir, Mac!"

"Aih?"

"Where's de dram-bottle? De jontleman 'll give us de liberty o' de fire a while."

"Here's the bottle. Will you take a taste?"

"Why den dat I will so, you may take your bible oat of it. But stay, aisy a minit," [uncorking the flask, wiping the jole with the sleeve of his coat, and handing it most politely towards James, who continued eyeing him with great suspicion]—"may be you'd like to try what's inside of it, Sir?"

"No, no, we're obleest to you!" said James, waving him off, with a degree of sullenness which he thought the freedom warranted.

The refusal did not appear to break the heart any more than it lessened the spirits of the stranger, who immediately took upon himself the task which James had declined, and performed it with evident satisfaction.

"I don't blame any man for liken his own best," said he, fixing his eyes with a knowing leer upon James's bottle.

"O then indeed you're out there, for all!" returned James, "I wasn't so fond o' meself, that way. Its only a drop o' somethen I brought with me, in case any thin bad would be there before me."

"Poh! sure 'tisn't to night dey have any power at all, only Holland-tide, and the Inhiad low-onthina?"

"O iss, beggen your pardon, and to night also"—said James, who piqued himself on being a kind of authority in all superstitious matters—"as I," he added with a mysterious nod, and compression of the lips and eye brows, "have good reason to know. To-night isn't so bad as Holland tide for 'em, but still they do be there for all."

"I wonder who dey are dat do be dere at all."

"Vaarious sorts, they say. The *dhina mauha*, or good

people, that is the fallen angels that was almost lost, formerly, and must remain that way, Heaven save the mark, 'till the day o' judgmint, and more o' them the souls o' those that arn't bad enough for the great purgatory, and must be doen pinence that way upon the earth—wanderen over and hether, some without air a head on 'em, and more this way an' that, until their time is expired, and others of 'em that arn't buried in consecrated ground, and more that has debts upon their souls, an' things that way."

"I wonder now," said the little stanger, "would purgatory be as hot as that fire?"

"It's not a point o' faith with uz Catholics to say what sort purgatory is, whether 'tis hot or cold—or what is the nature o' the punishment that's there—but it's great, surely. I hear of a man that was lying once upon a sick bed, praying, and an angel coom an axed him would he rather have seven years' sickness o' that nature, or three minutes in purgatory. 'The three minutes then, to be sure,' says he. Well and good! he wasn't one minit o' that in purgatory when he cried out, 'O murther,' says he, 'I was only to be left three minits, an here I am three hundred years already."—See what it is!—

"See what it is, why!" replied the other, who had sidled closer up to the speaker, and before James had power to enforce the moral of his anecdote, he found himself on the flat of his back—a great bundle of hay stuffed into his mouth, so as nearly to smother him, while the foolish-looking fellow whipt out of his pocket the key of the hall-door. He could neither stir nor groan.

"Drag him o' one side out of the light," said the latter —"the boys are laving the field. Let us get into the dark until they pass. Cry out, Sir, if you like. Pigs *may* whistle, but they have very ugly mouths for it."

They moved on, and James had the cruel mortification to see the herdsman and his companions saunter slowly along within fifty yards of them, towards their own homes—ma-

hing some observations on the change which was just beginning to take place in the night. They loitered an instant about the fire, where James and his unwelcome visiters had been standing—held out their hands as a hissing sound in the circle of flame led them to suppose that the rain had already commenced—and then walked off and disappeared in the darkness, to seek a remedy in the luxury of slumber, for the weariness of the evening's pastime. James felt his heart die away within him, as their voices grew faint in the distance, for, always disposed to overrate any peril in which he happened to be placed, he thought he had no further chance of deliverance from the blood-hounds into whose hands he had fallen.

"Here is the key, Awney," said the taller of the men; "now where are you to meet Suil Dhuv?"

"Here, dis way—near to the path, down the field—so that the horses won't miss us. Drag this gomeril after us."

While they were hauling the poor unresisting James along the ground, in that fashion which Teague, in the *Committee*, calls an Irish sedan, the thunder-storm commenced in good earnest—and the sound of horses' hoofs ringing against the hard field, was heard plainly, at a distance which rapidly diminished.

"Here dey come!" said Awney; "he told me to be before him an' try a trick o' dis kind. Little he thought we'd have it doon so aisy."

At the same instant the four horsemen whom they expected, came on at full speed, and bolted upon the footman at so perilous a proximity before they reined up, that the foremost animal sunk his hoof deep into the soil within an inch of the head of the prostrate domestic, who was unable, even by a groan, to make them aware of his danger.

"Who's there? Maney? Farrel? Well? what have you done?"

"Whist? Coom down o' your horse, and see!"

Suil Dhuv dismounted.

"Ay, well done! Awney," said he, when the latter had put him in possession of the whole of their proceedings—"Now, let me see! My lads, which of you knows Drumscanlon house?"

"I remember every twist and turn of it," said Awney, "since I gev deletter dat night to this nat'rel on de ground." James groaned in heart at the recollection.

"Very well, Awney—since I have got the key, I will require little assistance. So do you, lads, ride hard and fast over the commons, to the Corig-on-dhiol, for fear we miss the other prize. They must have foundered by this time."

Mun Maher and his two companions rode off, seemingly well contented.

"Maney," continued the Coiner, "take the reins of my horse, and stand close to your prisoner. And now Awney, the key, and follow me! If anything should happen, Maney, you know our signal."

They went off together towards the house, leaving James in a state of mind which may possibly be guessed at, when we say that the very gentlest idea he had of their intentions was, that they were about to set fire to the dwelling, and rob and murder every individual they found under its roof.

A quarter of an hour elapsed, during which James suffered a degree of the torture of the poor man, the story of whose fortunes had betrayed him into a forgetfulness of his own personal safety, and whom, for his innocent agency in his misfortune, James was once or twice inclined, notwithstanding his Catholic principles, to wish in a worse place. His agony of suspense, however, was only changed for that of despair, when he beheld Suil Dhuv returning in haste with the form of a female in mourning, which he was not long in recognising, hanging on his shoulder, stretching her hands back in silence towards the house, and struggling violently, but very vainly. When they came near, he perceived the oc-

casion of her silence. A heavy cotton handkerchief was tied over her mouth.

"Loose the gag, now, Awney," exclaimed Suil Dhuv—"nobody will hear her squalls now. Stay, I'll do it myself." And setting down his wretched prey, he slipped the knot of the handkerchief, as the turgid and blackening face and staring eye of the prisoner advertised him of the necessity of using some expedition. The instant the obstruction was removed, a shriek, as wild and piercing as female terror ever uttered, burst from the disfranchised throat, and died away in the horrid gurglings of suffocation, as the ruffian, startled by the sound, griped the poor girl's throat hard, cursed, swore at her, and even had the brutality to clench his rough fist, and raise it as if to strike her on the face.

"Come, gi' me the horse here, Maney. Be silent, I warn you, if you value your life!"

"I do *not* value it, ruffian!" she exclaimed, renewing her cries for assistance—"I will not stir! Stand back, coward and villain that you are! O, have I no friend in hearing? Am I quite deserted? O Heaven, hear me!"

"Here, put this loody about you, miss, an I be quiet, that's what you'll do," said Suil Dhuv, attempting again to force her on the horse, while the animal becoming restive at the fearful sounds with which his ears were assailed, increased his difficulty and his impatience.

"Lilly Byrne!" exclaimed the exasperated Coiner, "do you remember the note that warned you from the sally grove. It is the same friend that wishes to save you now."

"I want no friendship like this. If danger threatens me, let me meet it by my mother's side. If I am to die, let me perish under my own roof. I will not stir from this! I will not go with you!"

"You shall, by ——!"

"I will not stir! Help, Heaven! O Heaven, do not forsake me now! O my Lord, whom I have served, must

this happen while your lightnings are about us? O hear me, my last and first friend! Do not forsake me; strike the ruffian—or strike *me* from his horrid grasp. Ha! help—I am heard. They are coming—help—help!"

Heaven did hear her. A horseman dashing furiously toward them through the heavy rain, intercepted the flight of the Coiner. It was Robert Kumba. He sprung from his horse, and called in a hoarse voice on his enemy to stand. Lilly, recognising him, with a cry of joy, ran towards him with outstretched arms.

A bullet from the holster pistol of the Suil Dhuv was swifter in its course than she. The space was empty where she should have found her lover, and before she could distinctly comprehend the accident which had occurred, the arm of the ruffian had again encircled her waist.

Again she renewed her cries of fear and agony, and again they were heard and answered. The thick and husky voice of a man was heard at the upper end of the field, fulminating a volume of threats at some person who obstructed his passage, and who, by the fierceness and loudness of her shrieks and entreaties, showed that Lilly Byrne was not the only female sufferer in the affray. At the same instant James succeeded in liberating himself from the trammels in which Maney had bound him. He started to his feet—threw his arms out from his shoulders as if to assure himself of his recovered freedom, then, by way of an introductory feat to the exploits which he meditated, he clenched his fist, capered into the air with a "Hoop! whishk!" and descending with the whole weight of his person upon the gaping and astonished gold-finder, bestowed him a blow on the temple that speedily rendered him indifferent to the whole affair.

While he paused, a little awe-struck by the elevated pistol of the Suil Dhuv, the strugglers in the dark approached more near. The Coiner grew pale and red by turns as he recognised the voices.

"The very graves will give up their dead to save you after this," he exclaimed. "I believe you're charmed. No matter. It was well I took care of the pistols and ammunition. Up! in spite of——"

"Drag—tear her from me!" roared the Palatine, calling to James, who was hurrying towards them, "she would abet the murder! Let free my arms! Look! He is on horseback—he's gone—escaped!"

"Do not go!—O mercy!—husband! fly!—have mercy on me! I will not quit him ruffian!" The woman continued, struggling wildly, as James tore her from the old man and hurried her away to a distance from the place—"O my good man, Heaven will bless you, and let me go and separate them? They are my husband and my father! Heaven bless you and do! Heaven bless you and—You villain let me go! They will murder each other!—Father! My father! Have mercy on me, father! Run! run for your life, Denny, honey, run!"

Before the first sentence of this speech was uttered, the two enemies had confronted each other in silence. A pale grim smile, which showed more ghastly in the reddish light of the now subsiding fires and the momentary flashes of the lightning, showed the deadly satisfaction which the old man felt in the encounter. The hatred of his antagonist was not less apparent, but there was a degree of quivering insecurity about the muscles of his face, which signified that the encounter perplexed at least as much as it gratified him.

"I thank Heaven, Macnamara—we are met, at last," said the old man. "Give up that lady—and come with me—quietly."

Suil Dhuv elevated his pistol, sheltering the lock cautiously with his hand, but having only one shot remaining, he felt that it would be more prudent to husband it. "I do not want your life," said he, "stand o' one side, and let me pass."

"I warn you to stand back," said the old man. "In the name of the king, whose laws you have broken—I arrest you for a prisoner."

"You had better not mind it," said his enemy.

"Villain," continued the Palatine, "your hour is come. I took you into my house and into the bosom of my family, when the whole world besides had cast you off, and the gratitude you showed me was to render my condition as desolate as your own. I have hunted you out to bring your deeds home to your door—and the Almighty has delivered you into my hands at length."

"Yes," replied the ruffian, warmly—"you took me into your house, to thrust me out again more destitute than ever. You threw temptations in my way that man could not resist, and beggared me for yielding to them. When I left your house, I had done you no injury—your benefits I had paid with my labour—I sought to do you none—I lived an easy life with my brother, and might be living with him still, if you and yours had not risen up against us to divide and persecute us. Ye murdered him among ye—and ye left me without a friend in the world. Take the fruits of your labour! You ruined me—I hated you—and I hate you still—but I am satisfied with the revenge I had—I tell you again I do not want your blood. You have but a little to spare, and if you'd keep that little, you'll stand aside and let me go my ways."

"Daring and hardened wretch," exclaimed the Palatine—"you may well say that you have been satisfied. If blood was wanted to content you, you have had enough."

"Come—come," said Macnamara impatiently—"I don't understand you, but I have no time to bid you explain your meaning."

"Advance at your peril?"

"What rasin have you to me, Mr. Segur? I tell you 'tis better to let me go."

"No reason, certainly," exclaimed the old man—"give

me back the old blind man you murdered first—and then give me my daughter—and you may go your ways in peace."

"O—poh! how do you know I had any call to the dark man—and as for Sally—sure there she's westwards in the fields; take her—and welcome. Keep out o' my way now, I'd advise you. Ha! ha!—O if you think it's *that* I mind!" checking his horse, as the Palatine presented a pistol, and gathering the now insensible Lilly closer to him, as he prepared to set his foot in the stirrup.

"Poor duped, deceived wretch!" cried the Palatine—"once more I bid you stand—Advance, and you are a dead man!"

"Poh—fire and——"

The oath was never finished. The old man discharged his weapon, and darted forward to prevent a return of the fire. The horse at the same instant reared back on its haunches so as to entangle the foot of the rider in the stirrup, and then plunging furiously forward, dragged him along the ground until both were out of sight. The young lady was snatched from beneath the very feet of the terrified animal, as they were about to descend upon her, by James; while the Palatine and the remainder of his party, who only now rode up, hastened in the track of the flying animal, with lighted faggots in their hands. They found the wretched man lying on his back on a heap of stones (some of which were smeared with blood and battered flesh), gasping in the agonies of death. He waved his hands and outstretched fingers before his face as the dazzling red-light of the crowed torches flashed upon his eye-balls. A frightful convulsion, first of terror, and then of hate, passed over his countenance, as the Palatine passed through the strong light and gazed down upon him, after which the working of his jaws grew more painfully stiff and difficult—his person writhed in agony—a shivering passed through his limbs—the death foam oozed over his teeth

and lips—the spirit, that seemed to cling with a desperate consciousness to its clay, as its last hold, was forced abroad to encounter the ruin it had earned for itself—and the book of its mortal crimes and sufferings was closed and sealed for the judgment.

CHAPTER XV.

"Where is the life that I led?"

THE silence, which the fearful death of the murderer had imposed on the party who accompanied the Palatine, was unbroken for many seconds. They gazed on the shattered body and on one another, as if the extreme horror of the occasion had left them unable to form an unassisted conjecture on the course which should be pursued. The old man was the first who spoke.

"My part in this deed," he said, handing the discharged pistol to Mr. Cuthbert, who had just then ridden up, "may be called in question. I am your prisoner, and ready to answer for what I have done. Cover him! cover him! in mercy," he added, as one of the men stooped down apparently with the intention of removing the body—then flinging his own great coat over it, while he averted his eyes in strong dislike and compassion blended—a feeling which the pitiable appearance of the unhappy wretch, who had, but a few moments before, stood erect in the daring and dreadful defiance of desperate guilt, could not but excite even in the bosom of those whom he had most deeply injured—"I never, before this hour," the old man continued, "drew one drop of blood, knowingly, from the smallest creature the Almighty ever endowed with life—and I like not the look of this well enough to believe that I can be tempted to a second trial. If my human passion," he

added, uncovering his head in the rain, and looking upward, "has had too large a part in the action which I have done—may He forgive and pity me."

"Why should you be uneasy?" said Mr. Cuthbert, "there was no other course left, and you only made justice certain."

The old Palatine shook his head, and replaced his hat upon his brow, while the remainder of the spectators raised the body for the purpose of removing it to the house of the nearest cottager.

Slowly, and in silence, they took their way toward Drumscaulon. They could perceive, by the rapid manner in which the lights passed from window to window, that the confusion, occasioned by the occurances of the last hour, had not yet subsided. The flagged floor of the hall was wet with the dripping of hats and great-coats, and two or three of the guests, heedless of the pelting rain which still descended, were engaged in whispering consultation on the gravel plot outside. As they passed the kitchen door, they heard the voice of James Mihil, who, in the attitude of a Demosthenes, was employed with all his might in haranguеing one of the Coiner's accomplices, the only one whom they had succeeded in apprehending.

"Indeed you never 'll pass the next assizes, so you may make your mind aisy. Indeed, the hangman 'll make his perquiges* o' you, so he will."

"Don't be botherin me, I tell you again, you fool."

"Botherin you, indeed! I wondther is it I or the hangman that 'll bother you most, you daaran villyan, to lay hands on the young missiz. An that intricket little sprissawneen † that put the gag upon my mouth, what luck we had not to lay hold of him!—Fool, inah? I won lther is it yourself 'll look most like a fool, when I'm readen your last speech on a bit o' whitey-brown paper, in the Irish-

* Perquisites. † Small fellow.

town, an you cutten capours above on Gallows-green, with a hempen cravat about your neck, as proud as a paycock spaken to nobody."

"I wisht," said the prisoner, "I did my mother's bidden this evenen. I wouldn't be where I am now. He's a fool that refuses the mercy of Heaven when it is offered him—but it's too late to speak about it now."

Mr. Cuthbert here broke in upon the dialogue to inquire after the wounded Kumba and Miss Byrne, who were both attended in separate apartments—and neither of whom had yet fully recovered from the insensibility into which their sufferings had cast them.—During the few weeks that were suffered to pass away, before the former was sufficiently restored to bear a removal to his own house, no communication more direct than an enquiry at second hand, passed between the friends—and Kumba left the home of his mistress, without even the ceremony of a formal parting.

This heroic forbearance was prolonged for many years, during which, the character of the young "middle-man" appeared to have undergone a perfect change—a change which communicated itself to his circumstances, and to the property which he held. The dwelling-house gradually put on a more civilized appearance, the stones which covered the grazing land were removed and appropriated to the more advantageous use of fences and boundaries. The cattle began to look more sleek and comely, better pleased with themselves and with the world around them. The barn and granary groaned beneath their burthens, the stroke of the flail was heard incessantly throughout the autumn, and the grating of cart-wheels over the well-gravelled avenue scarce ever left the ear at rest throughout the day. Notwithstanding all the hints that were dropped in his hearing, of the satisfaction which these improvements had given in a certain quarter, Kumba was careful to abstain from anything that could indicate a premature anxiety to revive the memory of departed hours, and he even chose, on Sundays,

to attend a chapel which was near three miles from his residence, rather than hazard a renewal of the distractions, which his presense at the parish place of worship had in old times, so frequently occasioned to another as well as to himself.

Lilly, whose pure and gentle heart would have been content to find its sole worldly enjoyment in hearing of the happiness of one whom she loved with so disinterrested an affection, was more pleased than grieved at this privation, and felt herself repaid for all the self-denial by the accounts which daily reached her (under the form of sly jokes and hints from witty visitors) of Kumba's welfare—and by an occasional exclamation from James, thrown out in an accidental way, of "what a fine man Master Robert was riden into a fair in a mornen!"

Alas, for human nature! alas, for friendship! alas, for all that is sincere, and honest, and benevolent!—it would be we fear, a mournful and humiliating task for the philanthrophist, to analyze the motives even of the most seeming amiable actions that pass around him, and discover how few are affectionate, how few generous, how few are compassionate, how few are humble, even of those who act the parts, and imagine themselves to be what they appear. Our best friends, says a modern aphorist,* have a jealousy even in their friendship, and if they hear us praised, will ascribe the commendation, if they can, to some interested motive. We appeal to the reader, whether he has not frequently found through life, that the most disagreeable intelligence has often reached him through the medium of his kindest and most sympathyzing acquaintance—and whether, in the fulness of an extatic heart, when he sought that same kind friend, for the purpose of communicating to him a piece of sudden good fortune which he had experienced, he has not often been met by some

* The author of Lacon.

chilling doubt, some friendly cautious hint, which has humbled his vain heart, and

> "—though that his joy were joy,
> Yet threw such changes of vexation on it,
> As it might lose some colour—"

and showed him at the same time, that the friends whose sorrow went before his own in the hours of despondency and disappointment, yet lingered far behind him in the sympathy of gratulation. We shall not stop to calculate the number of those whose generosity might safely undergo a test so severe, and perhaps, so uncharitable.

Neither shall we examine whether the worthy Mrs. Hasset was one of the many whose benevolence passes current and unsuspected even by themselves; or whether she were influenced by any other impulse than that which she herself believed to be the sole motive of her conduct—a feeling of unalloyed good-nature and neighbourly kindness—when, arming herself against the inclemency of a misling April morn, in cloak, pattens, and hood, she took her early way to Drumscanlon, to communicate and condole with the old lady and her daughter, on what she conceived to be a very heart-rending piece of news.

"A mo'st, soft, mornen, it is, Ma'am," exclaimed a voice that was familiar to her, as she slipped off her pattens on the steps of the hall door. "Herself is in the kitchen garden, westwards, walken with Miss Lilly—but I'll run an call her to you, Ma'am."

"Do so, James. How is she?"

"Ah, then, only poorly," James replied, leaning on the end of the hoe with which he had been clearing away the grass tufts from the gravel plot, and tossing his head with a mournful significance. "The deafness is growing worse with her—an she can't knit, nor do a hai'porth, the eyesight is so bad. They got a sort of a little pochay for her, a thing like a chair for all the world, only wheels—with

wheels to it—so as that I draw her about a piece every mornen—but I fear it's all no use. They got new spectacles too, in place o' the eyes—but when our legs, an' our ears, an' our eyes are going from us in course o' nature, the art o' man wouldn't make us new ones."

Having pronounced this profound apostrophe, James hurried towards the garden, while Mrs. Hasset adjourned to the parlour, where she occupied herself, until James's return, in regulating the furniture, whisking the dust from the chimney ornaments, and lecturing the housemaid for her negligence.

The lady of the mansion was, in the meantime seated with her daughter in a small thatched summer-house in the garden. Age and sorrow had laid a heavy and visible hand upon her frame; and it was with some difficulty that even Lilly Byrne could at all times succeed in awakening her attention, so as to arouse her from the lethargic state into which the wasting of nature's resources had reduced her.

"Come, now, you must walk, mother," said Lilly, passing her arm beneath that of the drooping lady, and lifting her from the rustic seat; "the rain is over, and the sunshine will do you good. Only as far as the sun-dial and back again——"

They proceeded along the walk, the old lady leaning on her daughter, and supporting herself on the other side with the gold-headed oak stick, which had for many years been the companion of her husband's walks. The change which had taken place in the person of her daughter was also considerable. Her shape, though less pliant and sylph-like, had more of the majesty of womanhood about it, her step was firmer and more easy, and her features, less delicate of tint than in her early days, were covered with a peaceful serenity that told of conquered sorrow, and the unruffled calmness of a resigned spirit—like a battle field over which returning peace had thrown her mantle of rustic quiet and abundance, without concealing the graves of buried hopes,

and vanquished passions, that gave a sombre interest and solemnity to its loveliness.

"What was it the visiters said yesterday," Mrs. Byrne inquired, in a faint tone, "that made you all laugh, Lilly? You have not told me that yet, though I asked you three times."

Lilly looked confused and hesitated, and her mother, by a feeble, melancholy smile, showed that she understood the cause of her embarrassment.

"I'll not ask you, Lilly," she continued, speaking with difficulty. "I understand he is greatly changed. I wish I could see you happy with him, Lilly, before I died."

Before her daughter could reply, James had entered the garden. The talent of this domestic did not lie in a very perfect discrimination, and it was a fault which involved him in many a gentle *fracas* with his "young mistress," that he could at no time govern his voice to the proper tone while addressing Mrs. Byrne. He knew she was deaf, and, once convinced of the necessity of speaking aloud, and being wholly unacquainted with the effect of his own voice above a certain familiar key, his gentlest communications frequently operated on the nerves of the old lady with the influence of a galvanic shock. At the present moment, while she was looking with some faint slyness of eye on the changing countenance of her daughter, he approached her, unperceived by either, and, placing his lips close to her ear, thundered into it, "Misthris Hassit, ma'am, that's wanten you, av you plase."

Both ladies turned suddenly, and beheld James standing with his usual earnest gaze fixed upon them.

"I often spoke to you about that, James," said Lilly—"One would think you took a pleasure in startling my mother. Tell Mrs. Hasset, your mistress will feel obliged by her walking into the garden for a few minutes.

"I will, Miss."

"Take a pleasure!—Ah, fie! Miss Lilly, I didn't think you'd

say that at all. I'm heartbroken with it for a story; what am I to do at all? If I speak small, I'm toult to speak up, an' if I speak up, I get crossness. Well, I'm going, Miss —'twas unknownst I done it. To the garden, I'll tell her?" and away he strode, humming to himself the popular distich,

> "The finest divarsion that's under the sun,
> Is to sit be the fire till the praties are done."

In a few minutes the ladies were joined by their good-natured visiter, who, after the usual ceremonies of greeting had passed, proceeded, with a face of deep condolence and satisfaction, strangely yet visibly blended, to unburden her heart of its freightage of bad tidings.

"You have not heard the news?" she said, glancing at the eyes of both her auditors in turn.

'What news?"

"Well, I'm glad you have not yet heard it, for I was on mornus for fear some thoughtless person would have blundered upon it before you, without any preparation. You, I am sure, Lilly," she continued, "have too much good sense to let it take hold of your mind."

Lilly paused for a few seconds while she looked upon the now serene and cloudless heavens, and then turning upon the communicative lady an eye as lightsome and as smiling as the blue expanse itself, she repeated her interrogatory.

"Robert Kumba," said Mrs. Hasset, dwelling on every word with the distinctness which the importance of the occasion warranted—"Robert Kumba is going to be married!"

"What is it Mrs. Hasset says, my dear?" said Mrs. Byrne to her daughter.

"She says that Mr. Kumba is going to be married, ma'am," replied the latter, smiling, and adapting her voice more judiciously than James had done to the condition of the aged widow's auricular powers.

"Yes," Mrs. Hasset continued, a little annoyed by the perfect equanimity with which her distracting intelligence

was received by the party she considered most interested, "I always suspected that it was not for nothing all those fine alterations were taking place about his farm. It was only yesterday evening I learned that he had proposed for Miss Jemima Blaney. She is a pretty girl, indeed, and has a nice ready-money fortune, but I know where Mr. Kumba might have a better choice. However, that's past and gone, now. If not a better, at least a fairer and more honourable one—*that* I will say. But youth—money and youth are everything with the men in these days—girls begin to be looked upon as old maids now, at an age when they would be hardly suffered to go into company in my time."

The conversation was again interrupted by the entrance of James, who now approached them with a double proportion of importance and astonishment in his look and manner. Not forgetful of his former error, he now communicated his intelligence to Lilly, in a whisper which was not lost on the quick ear of Mrs. Hasset.

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed. "How sudden. !"

"Not altogether so," said Lilly, endeavouring to command the agitation which made her frame tremble; "he wrote to my mother a few days since, and we appointed this morning to receive him."

"Well, I rejoice most sincerely at it, indeed—and I will not stay to encumber you with my presence—for I know how I felt on these occasions myself in my young days—when poor Hasset—ah!—well, good morning, Lilly, I'll not detain you"—then turning back as if struck by a sudden thought—"it would be as well, perhaps, if you said nothing of that report, as it happens to be false—and it would only annoy the poor young man. Some malicious person that set it afloat, I dare say, to make us uneasy."

As the good lady left the garden, she was met by a gentleman in black, with a long skirted coat and slashed sleeves, a cravat neatly edged with the finest Flanders lace, a periwig of reasonable compass, surmounted by a small

glossy hat, clocked silk stockings, and square-toed shoes, with neat small buckles—all, in fact, that could be esteemed characteristic of gravity and respectability united. He bowed to Mrs. Hasset as he passed, and entered the garden in some trepidation and anxiety.

"It is a bad sign to go a wooing in mourning," said the lady, shaking her wise head as she gazed after him. "I hope no harm will come of it."

"The stranger, in the meantime, passed from the garden to the summer-house, in which Lilly Byrne and her mother were expecting him. Even his manly heart began to fail him when he caught the first glimpse of their mourning drapery through the scanty foliage of the spring boughs. The sorrows of the past—the afflictions which his own wantonness had occasioned, rushed back upon his memory in a dark and overpowering torrent, and unnerved his resolution. Some slight motion in the arbour, however, recalled him, presently, to a sense of the necessity of self-possession; and quickly arousing himself from his depression, he walked forward, without risking the return of his evil recollections by a second pause.

It was an embarrassing meeting to all parties—for the will must always remain in a state of embarrassment where the judgment and the affections are at war, and neither can indicate the extent to which the other ought to be indulged. Nature, however, generally asserts her own right to dictate on such occasions.

Kumba, with his eyes cast down, had commenced a confused and hesitating speech about his "gratitude for the indulgence which—" when suddenly abandoning himself to his natural feelings, he flung himself with a burst of grief at the feet of the young lady, and exclaimed—"I cannot do it!—Oh, Lily—Mrs. Byrne, say that you will forgive me?"

The tears of the penitent did not fall alone. Miss Byrne

was compelled in her agitation to seek from her mother the support which it was her wont to afford to the old lady, while she exerted herself to recover some degrees of calmness.

"Let us not distress my mother," she said at length—"our answer to your letter must have shown you that our hatred was not inveterate. Ah, Robert," she continued with a smile—"we have both had cause enough to learn the wisdom of forgetfulness. Here is my hand. Let us talk no more of the past, I am glad to see you."

In this position of affairs, we may be pardoned for suffering a veil to fall over the group, as we fear, with all his benevolence, the reader would feel little interest in following the parties through the peaceful and unruffled history of the fortunes of their latter days.

In less than a year after this occurrence, our little heroine, Lilly Byrne, was rewarded for her constancy and her endurance. Robert Kumba, was once more received as a welcome guest at Drumscanlon, and once more took his place at Lilly's work-table. Again Lilly resumed her stout flowered-silks, her cheeks recovered their bloom, and verified Mrs. Hasset's prediction that she would "forget all before she was twice married."

Mr. Cuthbert, unhappily, never recovered his money, but he had the satisfa tion of lodging Maney in jail for the swindling, Mr. Shine (though at the evident risk of his own reputa ion) undertaking to appear in corroboration—and also of razing to the ground the hold of the gang, and telling the whole story (with no other variation than that he took care to make himself the hero of the night) once a year at Drumscanlon, when he came for Lilly Kumba's full-bounds *again* the fair of Cork.

"I declare, miss——ma'am I mane, and I ax pardon for the mistake," said James, as he wished the bride joy after the ceremony had passed, "I declare I had soom-

then inwardly, you see, that always told me this would be the way of it in the end——" and here he gazed at arm's length upon the gorgeous favour which enveloped his own hat. "To be sure I was, greatly frightened that night—but, says I, taken heart, what hurt? Av they don't burn the house, we'll get help in time, please Heaven; and I took care they shoul'nt do that, for I made the thatcher put a big bit o' the *luserathocaun* (house-leek) in the thatch, so as av they were setting fire to it from this until to-morrow morning 'twould never light, any more than the stone wall itself."

A short space may suffice to tell the fortunes of the remaining characters of our history. The unhappy father, disappointed in all the expectations with which he returned to his native land, and unwilling to live in the ruined cottage where every object reminded him of some perished friend or vanished happiness of his youth, returned with his widowed daughter to Germany, regretting from the very core of his heart, the thirst of gain which had induced him to commit to the uncertain keeping of a stranger the charge of his domestic affections—affections which he knew not, until they were thus blasted, to have been so necessary to his peace of mind.

His daughter followed him willingly. From the moment of her husband's death, she never once uttered a complaint, never once upraided her father with the part he had acted in the scene which we have just detailed, but seemed anxious by her resignation and her affectionate devotion to all his wishes, to blot away from his remembrance the record of her early disobedience and ingratitude.

In this she was very successful, and both lingered out the remainder of their days with as much quietude of spirit, as those who have nothing left on earth to wish or hope, can experience. They never spoke of home or past times—but their hearts had been too sorely smitten to permit them

to seek refuge in the formation of new attachments from the memory of the old, and lost. Their life was lonely, therefore, though peaceful.

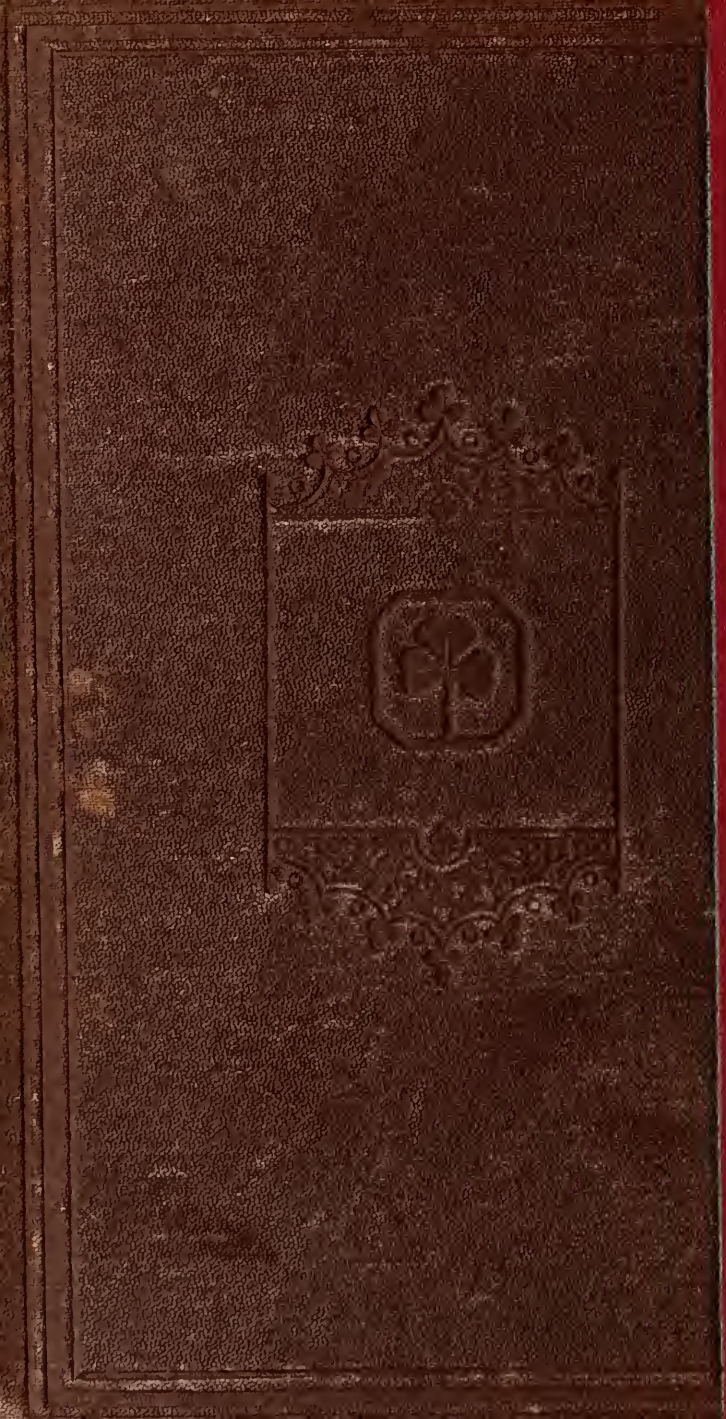
The tale of Suil Duv owes its origin to an incident related in an old Magazine, which fell into the hands of the writer, at an early age. A traveller in a lonely part of some country or another, stopped to dine at an inn on the road side, and afterward resumed his journey. Towards midnight his horse having lost a shoe, he knocked at a blacksmith's forge, to have the evil remedied. The latter grumbled much at being disturbed, at such an hour, but was silent when the traveller handed him a guinea for his trouble. Touched by this liberality, the blacksmith bade the former turn back as there was danger on the road. The traveller replied that he was well armed and had no fear. The blacksmith became urgent, and finding he could not prevail, bade the traveller look to his pistols. The latter to his astonishment found the charges of both were drawn! The blacksmith then showed him the horse's hoofs, and let him see that the clenching of the nails had been filed away, evidently, with the intent of disabling the animal from continuing the journey, beyond a certain point. At the request of the traveller, both defects were remedied, and the latter, in opposition to the urgent entreaties of the blacksmith, continued his journey. About a mile from the forge he was encountered by a highwayman, who seized his horse's bridle, and bade him deliver up his money. The traveller rapidly desired the robber on peril of his life to let go the rein. The latter laughed at his threats. The traveller presented a pistol,—the robber still mocked at him. The way-farer

at length fired, and shot his assailant through the heart. He then alighted, placed the body across the saddle-bow, and rode back to the forge, where by a light he discovered that the wretched highwayman was no other than the landlord of the Inn, who had been long in concert with the blacksmith, and made an easy prey of his guests by the practice of rendering their pistols useless. He fell a victim in this instance, to his confidence in the infallibility of his own precautions, while the traveller owed his safety, to the liberality he manifested at the blacksmith's forge.

THE END.

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW.

3 1205 02043 2074

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A A 001 396 945 6